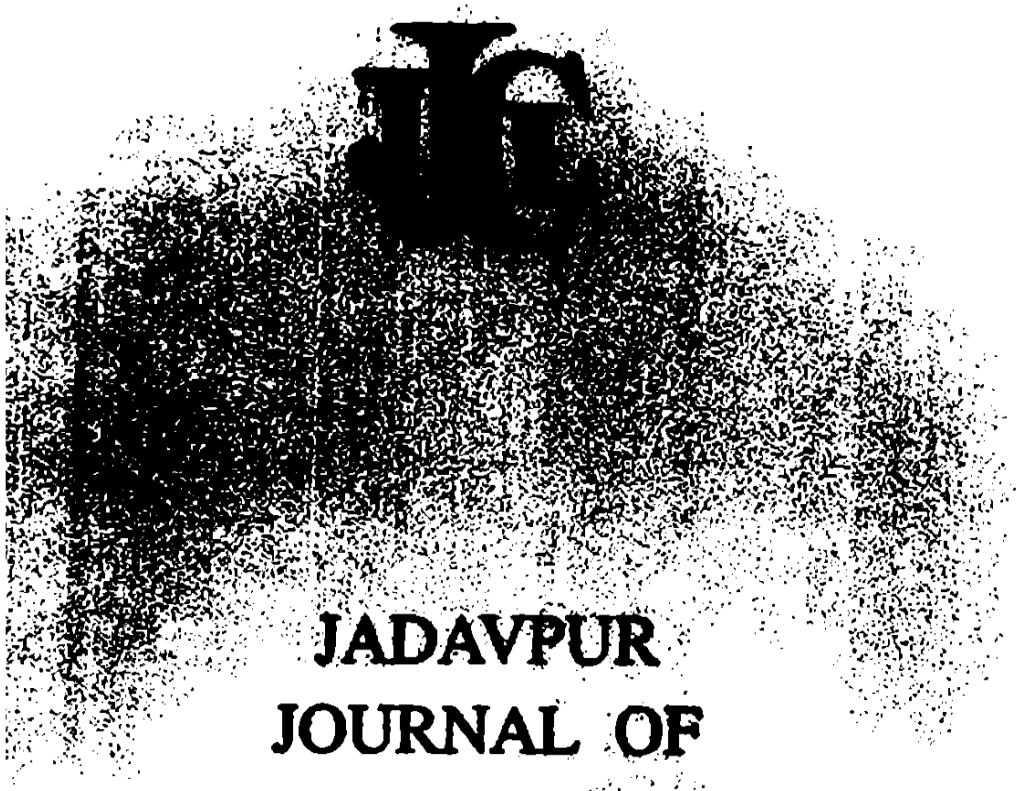


# JADAVPUR JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

40

2002-2003

DEPARTMENT OF
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
CALCUTTA

# JADAVPUR JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

40

2002-2003

# JADAVPUR JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

## 40


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Bhavatosh IndraGuru | Meaning as Conceptual Structure in Indian Poetics and Western Criticism | 7 |
| Binu Zachariah | Fictional Characterizations of Christ across Cultures | 41 |
| Nilanjan Chakrabarti | Interpreting Travel Literature: A Study of French Travel Narratives on India | 53 |
| Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta | Writing the Oral: Issues in Translation | 73 |
| Sisir Kumar Das | From the Hill to the Field | 85 |
| Lee Jeong Ho | Tagore's Influence on the Poetry Hun, Yong Woon (Man Hae): a note | 101 |
| Indra Nath Choudhuri | Modernism and *Hind Swaraj* | 109 |
| Moinak Biswas | Beyond the Subject of Difference: On a Persistent Plot in Manik Bandyopadhyay | 119 |
| Ipshita Chanda | "Phir bhi dil hai Hindustani": Translation in the Time of 'Postcoloniality' | 137 |
| Ghum Charan Behera | The Flower-of-Love-in-Idleness in Girish Karnad's *Hayavadana:* A Cultural Appropriation of Shakespeare | 151 |



2002-2003

*Editor*
Swapan Majumdar

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
CALCUTTA

Founded by
Buddhadeva Bose

Editor
1961-63 : Buddhadeva Bose
1964-82 : Naresh Guha
1983-95 : Amiya Dev

Editorial Board
Manabendra Bandyopadhyaya  Sibaji Bandyopadhyaya
Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta  Swapan Majumdar

Price: Rs. 50.00/$ 7.00

Published by Rajat Bandyopadhyay, Registrar, Jadavpur University,
Calcutta 700 032 and printed by Laser Impressions,
2 Ganendra Mitra Lane, Calcutta 700 004.

ISSN 0448-1143

JADAVPUR
JOURNAL OF
COMPARATIVE
LITERATURE

40

## *Our Contributors*

BHAVATOSH INDRAGURU is a Lecturer in the Department of English & Other Modern European Languages, Dr. Harisingh Gour Visvavidyalaya, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh. Binu Zachariah teaches in the Department of Humanities, Pondicherry Engineering College, Pondicherry. Her paper was presented at the CLAI conference in Trivandrum in 2001. Nilanjan Chakrabarti is a Senior Lecturer in French, Department of English & Other Modern European Languages, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta is a Senior Reader in the JU CL Department. She is also the coordinator of the DSA programme of the Department. Sisir Kumar Das of the integrated Indian literary history fame is contemplating to write a literary history of Bengal. The present article is only a preliminary draft on a *maṅgala kāvya* from a new point of view. Lee Jeong Ho, a Professor of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, Korea, specialises in Hindi. His article is a part of a major research project on literary contacts and influences between India and Korea. Indra Nath Choudhuri, the former Secretary of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, and then Director of the Nehru Centre, London, is now the Administrative Secretary of IGNCA, New Delhi. A Reader in Film Studies at JU, Moinak Biswas has been a consistent explorer of the languages of film and literature. Ipshita Chanda, a Reader, also of the JU CL Department, is among the few Indian scholars specialising in African Literature. Guru Charan Behera is a Reader in English, Ravenshaw College, Cuttack.

*Bhavatosh IndraGuru*

# MEANING AS CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURE IN INDIAN POETICS AND WESTERN CRITICISM

Meaning [1] is a development of an organisation of structures and contents of the categories and such a development becomes simultaneous since it exists on both the sides as an increase in enrichment of the categories. It could be seen that the internal content which is definite by all means becomes a method of obtaining a conceptualisation of all the primary models and primary categories. This aspect of proposing a comprehension is exactly what is needed for transformation of models and the categories into a newer enrichment so that the categories find a definite artistic configuration. Now we can say that meaning is a constitution of an appropriate notation exclusive to the primary models and primary categories.

II

Indian poetics [2] has taken into consideration the question of finding an exact nature of the meaning and it includes those categories which determine the thematic status of the process of concentrated development of enrichment. Accordingly, we have cognition, replacement, transformation, application and modification of the constructs and categories of the artistry. In each of the categories the process of creating, concentrating, and developing models would be observed as basic features. What actually happens is that the primary categories in the form of Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava and the like transform themselves in a manner determined by an ideal response of relevant cognitive medium and for the matter Bhava is an event of total enrichment. Sthayi Bhava on the other hand, appears on the level of functional artistry hence it is basic to any artistic situation. A similar situation could be seen to be in hearing upon such primary models as Sabda, Pada and Vakya. In these categories the 'effect of developing the enrichment is quite understandable. In Sabda, the transformation comes through the

construction of discourse in the universe, the community and the mind itself. It could be proved that primary models and primary categories bring about certain changes in the artistic construction by exclusively positioning them. One of the effects that comes through such an exercise is that of expansion of the total artistic situation.

In Western criticism [3] the status of meaning is determined on the basis of the fact that enrichment is obtained as a method of localized transformation. During the course of evolution of the meaning through transformation, correlation and the cognition do not occasion any improvisation and that is why each of these is appreciably reduced to become restricted in enrichment. It is possible to say, looking at the existing situation, that meaning is reduction in the level of enrichment and also of the construction of the categories in Western perspective. It is however important to note that these structures are reciprocal to one another in-so-far as primary categories are retained as equivalents in the primary models.

In this particular discussion we have taken up artistic, cognitive, semantic and transformational statuses of the models, the constructs, and the categories which create genuine artistic situation. For that matter we have Bhava Vibhava, Anubhava a Emotion, Experience, Imagination, Language and Thought on one hand and Sabda, Pada, Vakya, Words Letters and Syllables on the other. In that way, we want to prove the point that status and nature of meaning with reference to Bhava, Vibhava Sthahyi Bhava and the like is more appropriate than the Western standards of estimation of meaning in relation to emotion experience, imagination, language thought, words, letters and the syllables.

III

In Indian critical considerations, [4] genuine, artistry comes to be constituted and constructed by such categories as Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava and such models as Sabda, Pada and Vakya. Bhava is completely an enriched category which is brought about by correlation and transformation of various structures found within it. There are two features which must be understood in this regard as Abhinavagupta says :

> various gestures of acting favour a condition of coalscement by various prepositional modes and when such an event comes to be recognized, Bhava also comes to be created.

नानाभिनयैः सम्यग् बद्धान हृदयङ्गतान भावयन्ति
सम्पादयन्ति रसांस्तस्माद् भावाः (512:3)

Here Abhinavagupta is emphasizing artistic comprehension on the levels of notation and suggestion. It is in that way we are introduced to the conception of accessibility of various enriched segments of the meaning. In other words, the concentration of intermediate determinants like denotation and suggestion makes the total situation quite understandable in fact Abhinavgupta makes Bhava a cohesion of this concentrated form of the artistry which are always evolving. This point of view is well worth consideration because it presents a comprehension of given artistic situation. What actually happens is that the forms of artistic totality is interacted and that is why we get a transformed signification. In *Swapnavasavdattam*, Bhasa makes Raja to utter the following verses :

ऋष्वायता हि मुखतोरणलोलमालां
भष्टां क्षितौ त्वमगच्छसि मुर्ख सर्पम।
किस्चित् करोति भुजगस्य विचेष्टितानि॥

(स्वप्नवासवदत्तम: 298:3)

In these verses the same theoretical proposition could be understood. In this, Bhava is developing as a metaphor in relation to a total erotic situation and मुखतोरणलोलमालां is a concentration of suggested features and मन्दानिलेन भुजगस्य are the culminations of the same Bhava. It is also a point of observation that Bhasa introduces a new category of transitive metaphors in भुजग. On the whole we can just find it appropriate to include the total Bhava that is Rati to be developing in proposition to the relative development in the attending anubhava, (सर्व) Vibhava (माला) and the like.

The fact that we require to take into consideration is how Bhava produces immediate effect of a forthright, comprehension. What actually happens is that the forms of artistic totality are interacted and inter-textualised and that is why we get a transformation of the whole signification. This produces a functional cohesion in the internalized artistic situation and for that matter Bhava has a definite location in the construction, comprehension, transformation, and internalisation of the

artistry. Anandavardhana made mention of the fact that there is a constitutional comprehension and significant transformation of Bhava when an appropriate order is existing. It could be seen that Bhava is obtained as a method of an equilibrium between such other categories as Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, and the like. The actual proposition always states the fact that there is a coalescence of semantic and notational systems within the Bhava in order to create a distinct artistic order. Such a situation does not obtain any systematic explanation in Western critical categorization. For example, Imagination and Experience are disproportionate in resultant enrichment. It is also possible to say that transformation of enriched category is proportional to a similar concrete model or status in a transformed artistry. It could be seen from this that the procedure of locating a standard enrichment indefinitely shifts the possibility of totality in the artistry. From Aristotle and till Barthes this problem has been existing in Western literary approaches. Aristotle, for example, considers experience to be an imitative dislocation within the circumstance of change of the medium, and for that matter each of the variations in the changing medium creates, a suggestive category of which emotion is the most important. Aristotle has, at length, examined the possibility of changing the medium of transformed emotion into a relative model of extraordinary presentation. In that way two specific models in the form of Pity and Fear could be observed. Pity is a contextual adaptability of an artistic medium of parallel intensity to the enrichment of the same medium. Now we could say that conceptualized medium is appropriately a situation of transformed artistic medium taking place simultaneously in the text, the object and the reader. Fear on the other hand, is a situational transformation of comprehensible equivalence existing simultaneously in the text, object, and the reader. It is in that way emotive situation in Aristotlean understanding becomes an organization of the object, the character, and the reader, the quite understandably each of these is holistic within its capacity. It could also be proved that the methodology of transformation is intended as a measure of introducing total concretisation in each. In the *Hippolytus* of Euripides for example, Hippolytus makes the following exclamations :

> Alas! Alas!
> I in my misery all disfigured by

unjust curse of an unjust Father
I am destroyed Alas! Alas!...
How can I free my life from this
insufferable pain?
Let the black of death and night of fate
Lull me unhappy, to my sleep! (121-22)

Now we can see how Aristotle's understanding of transformational event in emotion could be worked out. Hippolytus is placing himself on the contextual proposition of both pity and fear and adequate representation of both the situations brings him closer to functional contents. Night of fate and black of death are two transforming models indicating a scope for further contextualization. It is just like a comprehension of different mediums involved in this. Division that Aristotle proposes is enough to create a change in adaptability of the artistic mediums. It is now easy to find out the status of meaning that Aristotle develops. In the first place, he proposes a division of total artistry into secondary emotive situation and secondly transformational procedures that he adopts are comprehension of each of the mediums. This makes the whole proposition to be significantly idealized. Coleridge, on the other hand, includes dysfunctional circumstances which have a positive role-orientation in creating a whole range of encoding in emotive category. This becomes a situation in which equivalent or parallel is always discovered whenever a method of enrichment is to be obtained and in that way emotion for Coleridge is a process of developing transformation of an observation and location of this is extended from marginal infinity to the maximum infinity. It could be seen that Coleridge constructs a system of balancing the enriched observations by extending them to the process of synthesis and transformation. What actually happens is that observation introduces a mode of sensation within thought and both get transformed into a total situation or object when there is an increased intensity in the parallel artistic situations. Coleridge calls this situation opposite and examines and relativity of this opposite in relation to reconciliation. We can say that Coleridge makes imagination to be a mode of conceptualization of every participant or non-participant observations because imagination is a category which is exclusive to the each of the different constructs of the observation. Andrew Marvell, for example says in the "Garden":

Here at fountains sliding foot
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide ;
There like a bird, it sits and sings
Then whets and combs its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various lights.

In this passages we can understand how the conceptual framework of imagination works. Marvell introduces permanent distinction between logical enrichment and cumulative antithesis of insignificance The object of soul acts as a correlative and in its early stages and it is remarkably imbalanced offering scope for expansion. The word 'Combing' explains the very nature of enrichment of soul and we could understand from this that another equivalent for soul has emerged. The word Flying is the poet's nativity in another cogenial location. What is important to understand in this passage is that the meaning has come out with an effect of observation (fountain's sliding foot) and becomes a meaning (longer flight). The point that we have in this consideration is a point of realising the actual proposition in the equivalent events and for this Coleridge makes observation a feature of parallel suggestivity and now we can say that imagination or observation or an experience according to Coleridge, becomes manifest in certain equivalent conditions. There is also a structural function of mutual adaptability of the artistic categories. Another issue which must be given an attention is the fact of presentation of emotion, experience and imagination. In each of these an artistic content is selected on account of its adaptability in incompatible and heterogeneous artistry and that is why imagination is almost negligible in homogeneous situation while it is maximum in distinct heterogeneity.

Emotive categories like experience and imagination become slightly different in their conceptualisation. In T. S. Eliot's critical theories, situation of experience is methodically prior to the state of an equivalent suggestivity. Experience is a fixed attribute containing the most of positive artistic situations and in that way it is divisible into emotion and feeling. Emotion is a definite position of an object in sensation and determination of object in sensation is done equally by both the

sensation and image. The actual transformation of definite locations of evolved enrichment produces emotion. Eliot considers the aspect of this enrichment as extended to the farthest sides of sensation and image and each side is capable of producing reversibility in the growth and expansion of these located points and it is because of that Eliot speaks of "escape from emotion" and "escape from the personality" (1951 : 21). The circumstances of escape from emotion and personality is in fact the highest suggestibility that an emotion could create and the point of creation would be the point of reversibility producing a correlation of the sensation and image. It could be seen that the sensation is rational proposition included in the event of comprehensible emotion and therefore growth of sensation brings an artist nearer to the situation of escape. On the other hand image is precisely a functional correlation developed by the evolved sensation and for that matter the condition of escape is always attendant on the concentration of the suggestivity. It is important to note that Eliot has developed a conception of numerical equality of the participating categories and in that way he always dislocates emotion in image and sensation. It might be well open to the examination as to why Eliot interposes preliminary synthesis rather than emphasizing primary transformation. In order to answer this question we have to take notice of an intensive variety of the categories that he employs and at that, thought, imagination, experience are the instances. In these categories the change from the object, medium, and the subject is brought about by proposing a harmonious balance in terms of equality of the enriched contents. This consideration is quite unique in Eliot's conception of the artistic experience as it is always prior to the secondary circumstances of change of the artistic medium or object or even the subject. We can understand the whole conception by developing a corresponding application of Eliot's ideas on the following verses of Dante in "Purgatorio":

> ...Pray, when thou shalt return
> to the world and art
> rested from thy long journey,"
> followed the third spirit after
> the second remember me, who am La Pia;
> Siena made me, Maremma

unmade me; 'tis known to him
who, first plighting troth had
Wedded me with his gem. (130-36)

In this particular passage, image and sensation are tragically constituted as reversible modes in growing evolution of the contents within them. La Pia's exclamations are sensory images of Pity and Fear developed by "Siena made me, Maremma unmade me" Pity is logically concluded in made and fear is attendant on unmade. Introduction of light imagery in gem creates a sensible equivalent for both Pity and Fear. The emotive situation that we find here is conceptualised as tragic Pity and Fear with some hope of redemption and the concrete instances of escaped emotion is observable in the tension that comes to be created between 'made' and 'unmade' and finally the same is creative of an emotive situation. Eliot's position on emotion is an analogical problem that always situates at a selective point of highest enrichment in sensation and image on the scale that is developing through the early evolution of the primary artistic emotion. There is hardly any question of putting a stop to the process of enrichment which always participate in the process.

New critics like J. C. Ransom, Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks, and R. P. Blackmur have tried to conceptualize the emotive artistic situation and for that matter they include language, the object, a medium, and the subject in a secondary artistic set up. This situation intends homogeneous construction of the different categories like experience, imagination, thought, and the language. Emotion becomes an object of comprehension of language in such a way that it creates homogeneous constructs in each of the different stages of creation. Homogeneity is a variation that is achieved when a category like emotion creates remarkable equivalence of the original artistic situations in the fixed conditions. Emotion, therefore, in New Critical understanding, is an image which is regularly perceived at the instance of knowledge. It could be seen that New Critics open up the possibilities of presenting regular changes in producing an emotion. In the second place, we can also say that emotive structure is a constitution of evolved artistic meaning in a perfected scale and for that matter numerical disposition can not be ruled out. In fact, in New Critical understanding, emotion is created through an expansion in the local contents of an image which

in due course of time develops to equalize the total contents of the artistry. It is in that way primary emotive situations are extraordinarily perceived in an atmosphere of rich and visualized artist. Ransom (1984 : 90) observes an incidental circumstance in the making of emotive categories :

> Universal or logical plan of the poem is born out perfectly in the sensuous detail which puts it into action.

We can say that the total structure is proposed on the various levels of selection and organisation and similarly emotion or feeling are organized for the sake of interpretation which is to follow quite logically and in that way emotion becomes a content of interpretation of logical rationality. This development in the understanding of emotive situation is quite remarkable and we understand that the emotion or feeling are focused towards selection and organisation of the responsive content of the categories. Such an aspect favours a difference that is fitted into the various methodologies of enrichment. In that way the New Critics have succeeded in presenting a distinction that logically prefers the employment of difference when emotion is being transformed into the art or homogeneity while the emotion is provisionally enriched. This proposition could be explained by considering the following verses by Donne :

> When thou and I first one another saw
> All other things, to their destruction draw,
> Only our love hath no decay ;
> This, no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday
> Running it never runs from us away
> But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.
>
> ("The Anniversarie")

In the above verses, the poet presents a circumstance of oneness through a difference between the possibilities of non-existence within these differences. 'Today', 'tomorrow' and 'everlasting' are the conditions governed by interfused ideality of love or loving. In New Critical presentation the verses have a necessity of a lengthened borrowing from the concepts and structures of the language. 'I', 'thou' and 'everlasting' are the growth of an evolution that is well represented, through textural medium and an intensive object. In that way, 'I'

becomes a locality of subjective situation whose purpose is hidden behind the parallel growth that is there in the metaphor of expansion indicated through the graduated love. The distribution of a condensed structure is, in fact, the occurrence of 'I' 'thou' and 'everlasting'. 'I' and 'thou' are indefinite events of fulfillment. The language therefore is indefinitely prescribed to achieve this state and that is why *'I' and 'thou'* are relatively and mutually indisposed to treat the effective events of suggestive format. We can now state that in New Criticism, the logical categories like emotion, imagination, experience and language are interpreted in terms of relative preferences that each is in a position to create and the emotion is conspicuously traced in the content of the language hence emotion is valid till the language is suggestive and otherwise the whole artistry is affected. In fact, New Criticism has dealt with the constitutional propriety of an original and enacted categorical situation in which the imaginative structure is befitted with foregrounded formations of the contents and constructs of the whole artistry. The position is centred on equal expansion of the emotive, verbal, and linguistic contents. Ransom, Tate, and Brooks have a fairly forthright opinion about the same and accordingly emotive structure is medially constituted by linguistic and verbal artistic situations and are the corporate locations developed at the instance of a homogeneity. The purpose is well served when the location of an emotion is medially structured to induce a homogeneous encoding in language and the verbal contents of emotion is equally developed in other categories. We can now say that the New Critics have proposed the measures of external adequacy, homogeneous evolution, contextual transformation, and disproportionate correlation as conceptual structures and each is a proposition for the development of the total artistic situation.

The emphasis that we could find in I. A. Richards is a closer conception developing a parallel suggestivity that correspondingly affects a variance in the intensity and level of enrichment of the categories like imagination, language, and experience. Richards understands the necessity of constituting a well developed artistic situation in which the above categories are methodologically prior to the constituted enrichment hence a circumstance develops that deviates the categorical contents for the sake of reversibility.

The idea of incorporating imagination and language as suggested equivalents is quite logical inasmuch as imagination is interacted by homogeneous experience. Richards emphasizes the point that the imagination is a union for balancing the heterogeneous dispensation of the categories, therefore the total system is operative at the instance of balance, poise and union. The question that it gives rise is related to the unique extension of the point of farthest homogeneity supplementary to the achievements of the whole system. Imagination is an extent of modification of an image and in that way it is divisible as sensation. Richards efforts do not quite prove this point rather create disproportion in the homogeneous constitution of the categories. The idea of supplementing the basic nature of imagination with a point of enrichment does not prove to be quite methodical as imagination is not always reciprocated by the creation of another ideal equivalent in harmony. The apparatus that is meaningfully conceptualised is a constitution of developed equilibrium in evolving expansion of meaning which once again is interlocated. the problem could be well understood by poetically applying the principle and for the purpose, consider the following verses by Yeats:

> O chestnut tree, great rooted blossomer
> Are you the leaft, the blossomor the bole?
> O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
> How can we know the dancer from the dance?
>
> ("Among School Children")

In these verses, objects of homogeneity are inter-located through a cumulative assortment of the progressive images hence 'chestnut tree', 'leaf', 'music' and 'dance' are determinate sensory relations. 'Chestnut tree' opens up two levels of experience, one of which is fulfillment of realisation and the other is infinite aberration of fulfilment 'leap', 'blossomer', 'bole', 'dancer' and 'dance' suggest a suitability of the latter experience and given expression. In that way emotion of fear or apprehension has been heterogeneously pursued in the passage. It is now quite possible to say that the constitution of meaning through imagination is obviously an event of cumulation.

Derrida, Barthes, Jakobson, and De Sasurre have approached the meaning in terms of its representation in the expansion of categories,

contents and constructs of the artistry and for that matter they view expansion either as an internalised suggestion, (as in Barthes and Jakobson) or as an external transformation which is always functional and continuous (as in Derrida). Derrida holds the view that the categories like language, experience, and the like are functionally continuous whenever an occasion comes up for the determinate transformation and occasion for this is divisible phenomenon into those mediums which approve of the evolutionary propositions. The text, the actor, the author are the three mediums which constitute core of precise events in an expansion of the artistry and each is situationally operative. The text is a circumstance of indefinite assortment that is externally situated in each of the artistic realisations, the author, on the other hand, is more external to the genuine artistry and therefore emotion, language, thought are subscribed not to any native artistry rather to the minimum of extended transformation that is there. Emotive categories are, according to Derrida (1991 : 119) correlation of disfigured and aberrated mediums in sensory perceptions hence experience is logically a total aberration. In the following observation, the point could be well understood:

> If totalization no longer has any meaning, it is not because the infiniteness of a field cannot be covered by a finite glance, or a finite discourse but because nature of the field—that is language and to a finite language excludes totalization. This field is an effect that of play that is to say, a field of infinite substitutions only because it is finite ...One cannot determine the center and exhaust the totalization because the sign which replaces the center which supplements it, taking the centre's place in its absence this sign is added, occurs as a surplus, as a supplement.

It is apparent that the objects purposed for the sake of enrichment are in fact, dislocated at the next possibility of totality (say of the whole artistry) and in that way meaning is interacted between sign and signifier. In other words, enrichment of the categories is reduced at the sight of next total artistic situation and in turn never reciprocated by the totality. The total situation is maximum in accordance with the proportion of correlated signifier and signified. If emotion (say horror) is the signifier the correlation with experience must absolutely become a proposition. This is, in fact, a content-wise growth of any category in relation to the succeeding shifts it could create in itself, is the point of an ideal content.

Derrida takes language to be the category potentially suggested through reduced transformation and that is why language operates as a system of displaced wholeness in each of the given situations. The arguments of Derrida are no well illustrated than by the poetry of Robert Browning :

> Now, don't Sir! Don't expose me! Just
> this once!
> This was the first and only time, I'll
> swear
> Look at me- see, I kneel, - the only time
> I swear, I ever cheated- yes by the soul
> Of her who hears-(your sainted mother, sir!)
> All, except this last accident, was truth
> This little kind of slip! - and even this,
> It was your own wine, sir, good champagne
> Which put the folly in my head! (Mr. Sludge, 'The Medium')

The question of abandoning the motivated self is temporarily mounted on proposing an assurance for oneself and that is why Browning keeps up the continuity of examination. *'Expose me'* is a medium of developing continuity because it is theoretically correlated with the expansion of assurance. (Look at me, see.) The proposition that is best suited for deconstructionist perspective is the constituted correlation of thematically indefinite text (which put the folly in my head) interacted actor (this little kind of slip) and infinite artistic environment (All except this last accident was truth). What mentions the nature of artistries is the total unsuitability of focusing on an equilibrium which is never obtained. It could be seen that the growth of an emotion of apprehension. (Now, don't, Sir!) is unequal to the suggestion developed in motivating the Soul (folly in my head) and hence the inverse of emotive categorisation proportionately imbalances the whole situation (It was your wine, Sir, the good champagne).

## IV

Indian Critical systems appropriately state the conditions inhering upon genuine artistic situations hence divisibility of the artistry into internal and external environments, primary models and primary categories, is always apparent. External situations are logically the concept of nominal

enrichment in which transformation does not yield enough suggested configuration of the categories while internal environment provides an accessibility to the enriched contents to incorporate definite propositions. These two states of mutual adaptability become determinants of what we call 'meaning' and accordingly meaning is a definite configuration of the artistic contents towards a properly located wholeness [5]. The constitution of wholeness is an inverse of the attending centripetal categories that is how a latent artistry has the total representation within the limits of transformation. Rasa, Dhvani, Riti, Guna and Alamkara are the critical systems which contain Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava and Sancari Bhava as the categorical structures introducing total appropriation of the artistry in each of the events, nature and status of meaning are hence determined.

Bhava is a constitution of effective notations in the total artistic situations hence Bhava becomes an apparatus of concrete linternalisation. The totality that is properly effected is specific to the medium (artistic), object (artistic), actor (artistic) and the environment (artistic) while homogenous contents of the artistry are transformed into a simplified, space orientation. In that way Bhava is a synthesis of interpretative medium and transformation of constructed categories into a functional orientation. The adequacy of the point of view is worth examination in relation to the application that it gives rise to :

> Against himself to life he
> brings
> A champion fierce, a portent of grim war
> Who shall invent a fiercer flame than
> lightening
> And peals to outpeal the thunder, also shall shiver
> The trident mace that stirs the sea, and
> shakes
> The solid Earth, the spear of strong
> Poseidon
> Thus shall tyrant learn how much to serve is
> different from the sway ( Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* )

Prometheus makes up a functional experience and constitutes disparate systematisation of Bhava and therefore the correlation of external "system with immediate environment is quite remarkable. The

Krodha or anger (Against himself to life he brings), Vismay or surprise (The Trident mace that stirs the sea) and Jugupsa or disgust (Thus shall tyrant learn how much to serve...) are constituted together to contextulise the underlying Krodha or anger against Jove. The words 'against', 'forever flame', 'lightening' and 'sway' give exact notation of inwardly oriented Krodha which at the same time, determines the attitudes of Prometheus Bhava, in that way, appears in an explication of surface emotion (anger) resolved in a proportional correlation of indeterminate emphasis on surprise and hatred.

Anandavardhana has taken Bhava to be a formal integrational habit which is operative on the different modes of creative ability. This ability shows itself in internalisation, appropriation, notation and adequate contextualisation of Bhava begins with internalisation of poetic qualities and is effectively constructed through the Rasas like Sringara (Erotic) and Karuna (Pathetic) If the Bhava is Sringar, sweetness, will, of sexuality, be extended over to word and meaning. It follows from this that greater organization on every level of poetical categories could be arrived at if the poet has any good understanding of Rasa and attendant moods. Internalisation, in that way, becomes recreation of factual tendencies in which concretisation is distributed in stages. The first stage is the stage of appropriate orientation with degrees of formal adequacy resolved by the conforming units of holistic categories. Formal adequacy admits of proportionate direction in Bhava. Appropriation, in the next place, is a more definitive development of such an order and it includes rich contentive perspectives. One of the earliest recognition of the same fact comes from the mutual tendencies of lapsing in which Kalaka, Pada and Vakya create an equal perspective for respective emotional and imaginative statuses which in turn constitute correlational plane for Bhava. Lapse of Bhava in that way is a developed coalescent of conforming categories. What is important for ourselves to understand is that Bhava having been, cognized and appropriated variates the lapsing features. Mammata, Panditraj Jagannatha, Mahimabhatta, Abhinavagupta and Rajshekhara have well understood the importance of such an aspect. Mammata, for examples, states that Bhava is meaningful only because it is constituted and created through merging categories like Vibhava and Anubhava. But Abhinavagupta does not agree with Mammata, rather he specifies on independent status

and existence to Bhava and as he says, Bhava is a normative proposition which generalizes the incomprehensible inequivalence by assigning reciprocal, simultaneity to each of the conceptual prepositions. For example, Sathayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhav, Aalambana Uddipana and Sancari Bhava exist independently of one another so long as and so far as they are not participating in the context oriented creative phase. It is broadly an opinion that seems to be based on the assumption that creative mode and creative facility are recognized interdependently and therefore when Sthayi Bhava becomes a medium for such an operation, the attendant categories merge into a newer fineness. We also understand, relying upon Abhinavagupta's observations, that Bhava is a proposition that requires context and medium besides appropriate equivalent units and in that way it is transferable, realistic and operative mode of knowledge. It is quite an exercise of understanding a distinction between functional and non-functional creativity.

Now it becomes easier to consider the functional and non-functional modes of Bhava. In the functional mode. Bhava is a normative proposition creating perspective for operative mode of knowledge in which it causes categories to merge and coalesce and in non-functional mode it becomes a proposition for the creation of equivalents. The point of view is well illustrated in Wordsworth's poetry:

> And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. ("Tintern Abbey")

In this we can see an abundance of growing Ahlad (delight), Vismay (Surprise) and Camatkar (wonder) or in other words we can say that Bhava is situationally operative on the above passage in a manner determined by Vismay (Something far more deeply interfused) Camatkar (Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns) and Ahlād (A presence

disturbs me with the joy). There is an expansion of each beating the three constructs (vismay, camatkara and ahlad) grow in relative proportion to one another. The motivation of delight in quietude for realisation of Brahma is well illustrated in 'sense sublime. ... And rolls through all things'. Such a fine nativity of Bhava is rarely displayed in English poetry yet Wordsworth presents total situation specific to the condition of Bhava.

While Bhava is a native condition to the growth of concrete artistic situation Anubhava and Vibhava constitute significative levels. Vibhava is the manifestation of Bhava which creates immediacy both in terms of response to the factors and attributes of the universe as well as to the immediate medium. In that way it is local to the medium while universal to the creative environment. The localisation of immediate medium breaks the creative environment into 'Alamban' and 'Uddipana' Vibhava begins localised signification in that it reorganises and restores immediacy and internalises factor and attributes of the universe. It must be made a point that is a localised significative order restoring the immediacy and internalising the universal. Abhinavagupta (*Abhinavabharati* : 513) favours and advocates such an opinion

> 'In dramatic representation what comes to make realisation possible by becoming a cause for such a possibility and such a realization is indeed what we understand as Vibhava.'
>
> अभिनये साक्षात्कारे सम्पन्ने तदुपयोगितया विभवादिव्यपदेश
>
> इत्यतो या परस्परकृता सिद्धिः सा भद्रं भवेदिति सम्भाव्यते।

Here Abhinavagupta is explaining the nature of dramatic presentation and reorganisation of the factors of universalised creative medium by standardising the enrichment. This point could be well understood by the following passage in Milton's *Samson Agonistes*:

> oft he seems to hide his face,
> But unexpectedly by returns
> And to his faithful champion both in place
> Bear witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns
> And all that band them to resist
> His uncontrollable intent (1749-54)

In this passage Vibhava appears in the form of might, strength/ heroism of Samson (Uncontrollable intent). The function of this 'Vibhava' is to 'transfer Samson' into the method of rebirth or regeneration. The heroic/marvellous bear is basically approached in this passage through the intended cause of might/strength/loss of strength. Hence, the chorus is presenting case for the rebirth of Samson. Vibhava is therefore functional in identifying a cause in the form of strength in 'Samson'.

The third category that comes to the observation is 'Anubhava'. Anubhava is a fixed notional category of internal cause and its reappearance as external preposition. Thus Anubhava creates another positional variation communicative of enriched proportion to the external medium in that it substantially changes the major and minor creativeness. Vishvanath's observation exactly point to this because he considers Anubhava to be an object of preposition which is internally sustained and internally constituted. It is a point of observation in the consideration of Vibhava that it presents a mode of inter signification by operationalinsing the same constituent.

In Keats, we can feel the presence of Anubhava.

> Their lips touched not
> Had not bade Adieu ("Ode to Psyche")

The sensation of creating an effect is brought about by sweet words and bodily movements hence in 'their lips touched not' the Sringar is uniquely felt. The Anubhava presenting bodily movement is unique and exceptional.

In the fourth place Sthayi Bhava contributes a great deal to the function of meaning. Sthayi Bhava is, a fixed category and is an exceptional numerical synthesis of concretes creative, construct, acting as modes in informal instances only and in formal situations whose position is significantly reduced. Sthayi Bhava in that way becomes a location of ideal creative instances more as a cause and less as an effect. It must be understood that the word permanent as it usually comes to be applied to Sthayi Bhava is hardy substantial for any purpose. Conceptually it recreates the positive and negative positions of the categories. the objects that come out of such a phenomenon are context

[illegible] and naturalised for the sake of medium. Visvanatha [illegible] (104) observes of 'Sthayi Bhava':

> [illegible] original state of experience which is neither to be made to [illegible] by positive instances nor be rendered so by negative [illegible], is known as Sthayi Bhava. It can never be replaced by [illegible] other state of mind. At most it can be added to or supplemented [illegible]."

[illegible] विरुद्धा विरुद्धा वापयं तिरोधातुमक्षमा:

[illegible] भाव: स्थायीति संमत: (3, 174)

[illegible] should be seen that Visvanatha gives a due place to the fact that [illegible] Bhava is fixed status of an idealized creative perspective. It is [illegible] of that it becomes numerical procedure for enriching or [illegible] the attendant verbal and emotive movement. The fact is [illegible] established and we will also make a record of that Sthayi Bhava [illegible] that order of signification in which both local and universal instances [illegible] a proportionally enriched variation and it makes universal to coalesce [illegible] local creative order. While Visvanatha approves of numerical [illegible] of Sthayi Bhava, Abhinavagupta slightly expands the scope [illegible] such an idea by making Sthayi Bhava to be expressive of single [illegible] order in that it is formally and informally instanced for the [illegible] of structure of Bhava, content of experience, proportion of creativity [illegible] the whole. In view of this Abhinavagupta states that it is because [illegible] Sthayi Bhava that Rasa becomes an idealization of universally [illegible] and creative contents. It is now possible to understand how Sthayi [illegible] is a system of creating objects of total meaning and enrichment. [illegible] understanding is substantiated by yet another position taken by [illegible] that Sthayi Bhava appears only in the form of meaning [illegible] realization of such a meaning. It is conclusively understood that [illegible] Bhava is creative of objects, proposition and order of meaning [illegible] the first place and signification in the second place. The appearance [illegible] Sthayi Bhava is inherent in the constructs which determine the [illegible] balance between the categories. For examples, Shakespeare [illegible] Lady Macbeth say:

> Come you spirit that tend on Mortal thoughts,
> Unsex me here.

And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top full
Of direst cruelty! Make thick blood,
Stop the excess and passage to remorse
That no compunctious visiting of nature
Shake my fell purpose Nor keep piece between
The effect and it. (I. V : 45-50)

It could be seen that Lady Macbeth is presenting 'Vibhatsa' in its incomprehensible variety. 'Direst cruelty, unsex me, from crown to toe' are some of the instances which occasion nativity for 'Vibhatsa' and to a lesser extent 'Jugupsa'. It is interesting to note that determination of Lady macbeth is composed, in unequal assessment, of these two Bhavas. The Vhibhatsa is presupposed as a methodology to exactly define the state of Lady Macbeth and Jugupsa precised by locating the objects, situations and events which bring about the same.

V

It is now obvious that the nature of meaning is situated on the largeness of comprehensible medium specific and precise object, equivalent and genuine environment. Indian Poetics presents a systematic view of each of these by incorporating divisibility, cognition, correlation and positional changes of Sabda Pada Vakya Bhava Vibhava and Anubhava and the like. In that way meaning is a fine location in the final expansion of these categories and the meaning always attempts to bring about proportional transformation, suggestive replacement, modelised applicability, and the like. There are at least two questions which demand our attention. In the first place, if meaning is location of an expanded category, how does the simultaneous enrichment bring about change in the feature of the participating categories? The answer that we have is related to the division of the artistry that Rasa and Dhvani system envisage. In Rasa, the total artistry is absolutely divided. Hence Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava and Sancari Bhava are permanently fixed in internal and external artistic situations. In that way Rasa becomes a highly developed concentration of principle cognitive, orders. The situation of totality in Rasa is infact a creation of comprehension within the newly created modal of correlated categories while each of these is remarkably inter acted. This process helps in creating adequate notions of which correlation is the most important. Such an idea finds support from the

view that Rasa is a suggestive replacement of specific status and proportional correlation of the creative categories by modes of primary transmutation and trans-imitation. It is broadly a consideration based on perfect numerical factor establishing role orientation in form of the participating categories. Replacement of specific status, proportional correlation of the creative categories, accumulated specificity and dislocation of intermediate determinants as universal creative modes become different conceptual tools for the creation of Rasa Bharata's position on Rasa makes it clear that idealized artistry creates a basis for Rasa and in this the position of such categories as Bhava, Vibhava and Anubhava is totally enriched thereby creating an artistic medium which is relevant for genuine artistry. In the next assessment of cognitive action two identifications of universalized artistry are produced in the form of internal nativity of organization and external function of regulated contents. In that way Rasa evolves through and inherence of several independently assorted artistic situations are produced. The Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava and Sancari Bhava are, infact, positionally independent genuine artistic situations which bring forth transformation of the contents and the constructs of any creative category. This is the feature that sharply distinguishes and differentiates Indian Poetics from Western literary Criticism [6] which is founded on immediate, local, temporary, denied transformation, organisation, and creation of the categories like thought, experience, language, imagination and the like. This problem could be well understood by explicating the applicational relevance of Indian and Western literary theories on the following verses:

स्खलति चरणं भुमौ त्यस्तं न चार्द्रतमा मही,
रकुरति नयनं वामो वाहुर्महुश्च विकम्पते।
शकुनिपरश्चायं तावद्धिरोति हि नैकश:
कथयति महाघोरंमश्त्युं न चात्र विचारण॥

(शुद्रक, *मृश्च्छकटिक*, 13, 386)

you think it horrible that lust and rage
should dance attendance upon my old age
They were not such plague when I was young
And what else have I to spur me
in the song ("Spur")

It is now possible to explain the nature of theoretical prospositions, inherent in each of the above. In the Sanskrit verses taken from Mrichhakatikam of Sudraka, Charudatta, infact utters the native structure of the total artistry. The Bhava of Bhaya (kathayati, mahaghora chatr vicarna) is divided into Sthayi Bhava of Jugupsa (supharti nanyam) Vibhava in (anaphora ritual), Anubhava in (skhalaticarana) and Sancari Bhava in (skhalatichrānam and sphuratinayanam). This structural enrichment has been provided at the instance of remarkable transformation of each category into another. For example Bhava in Bhaya is immediately transmogrified into Sthayi Bhava in Jugupsa which in turn is further divisible into Anubhava and Vibhava and Sancari Bhava. The native transformation of structure of the categories is felt as genuine artistry because the transforming situation is innately built up. Bhava is properly correlated, modelised, and cognitivised through skhalati, sphurati because each is approximate to the growth of Bhaya. Similarly Vikampate is a Sancari Bhava in as much as it suggests a medium for an applied tranference of Charudatta's experiential states. There is also a location for Vibhava and Bhava Alamban and Uddipana in the appearance of Bhaya and its externality in Mritunacatra Vicarna and Anubhava plays its part in associating (skhalati sphurati nayanam) and (mahaghoramrityum) by developing apprehension and horror. Therefore the Rasa of Bhaya is significantly replaced in the suggestion developed by proposing Bhaya as the centralized object and cognising and correlating jugupsa and vismaya, in as much as these two Sthayi Bhavas are replaced though 'Vibhava in Cinta' and the like. In that way models of transformation are absolute in almost all the categorical constructs of this passage. For example, Skhalati becomes totally functional because of Caranam and Sphurati is made artistically absolute because of nayanam vikampate similarly nayakash and mahaghoramrityum provide modelised equivalents for Bhava of Bhava. The point that comes to our notice is the extreme modelisation of the objects of transformation. That is why Rasa of Bhaya is felt as the growth of these propositions. This is perhaps a difference between Indian creative aptitude and Western consideration of the same problem. We can also note the fact that Vibhavas are obtained through a correlation of a direct determination of Bhaya through the eyes, the hand and the word. Precisely the Bhava of Bhaya is appropriately transformed through these objects (eye, hand

and word) into a nativity of a concrete Rasa. In this, several divisions of an independent and genuine artistry could also be seen. For example the structures eye, hand and word nominate predisposed transformation in Bhumi and Prithvi while Anubhavas create further, subdivision of the artistic situation in Skhalati and Mahi hence the whole Sphuratinayanam becomes a slated case of third broad division of an independent artistry from the centre to the periphery and is founded on the permanence of native objects of transformation. This is an idle situation in terms of the poetical approach of Rasa. It must be admitted that uniqueness of such a perfect artistry is wanting and lacking in Western poetry. For example, consider the above verses of Yeats. In this the ruined self of the poet is indicated through the ruin of the primary emotion. Such a conception is constructed on a remote deception of intense lust and highly dividualised rage and therefore the poet find them to be dancing attendant. The correlation of the emotions is not definitely proposed through transformation rather variables unite to form an interaction of these two hence the poet records the uncertainty of his own location within the lust or rage. What actually is happening is that the artistic situation is not conducive to the purpose, of suppression of the linear variables; and it is for that reason Yeats does not succeed in enriching any instance of transformation. This may be proved by considering the cases of attendants of plague, horrible and spur. The extremity of verbal displacement that the poet proposes is ultimately collapsed and becomes dysfunctional with the absolute equality of the enriched contents. For example — the enrichment of spur is equal to the artistic evolution of horrible and therefore both are balanced in as much as the numeral of both are logically the same. This is the problem faced by any Western poet in that the creative procedure (in most genuine cases) is laid on an absolute nativity of the artistry in the local environment of the poet. Thus the scope is not further extended. Indian critical reading of the same problem is profound and convincing. If we are looking through the Rasa and Dhvani systems, we will certainly suggest that the poem "Spur" is close to the most native situation in the total artistry. In this poem there are some constituents which create finer conditions for Rasa. Lust and Rage are the Sthayi Bhava of Jugupsa while Plague is the Anubhava while dancing is the Vibhava, and horrible could be taken to be as Sancari Bhava and therefore Vibhatsa is the Rasa that this poem

has. Yeats, in fact has worked out a formula for the cyclical functioning of the mutually transformed Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava and Sancari Bhava hence horrible is displaced as an event only for the sake of reciprocation by the lust and also rage. Yeats, circular synthesis continues well up to. What infact we find is that the words are reasonably coincidental with the enrichment that Yeats creates. In that way Rasa indicates a necessity of rage, dance, attendant, of old and the like.

The scene of poem could also be benefiting for the system of Dhvani.[7] Dhvani could be understood in those artistic situations which are perfectly antithetical in horrible, lust, rage, dance, attendance and the like. The poem derives its effects form the necessity of cognition correlation application, transformation and changes of the primary models and the categories. For examples horrible is an event in transformation of the Sthayi Bhava of Vibbhatsa with attendant lust and rage. In that way the same words are also the features of correlation of the Vibhatsa. While this is the scene, the cognition opens in plague and also spur and therefore the transformation of horrible has been independently arrived at in plague and spur because each is expressive of a new situation. The poem also provides a scope for positional changes and application of some models. There once again we have spur and plague as two verbally displaced positions of Sthayi Bhava of Vibhtasa yet this displacement causes the Sthayi Bhava to acquire a new feature and new meaning. In that way the poem becomes interesting aspect to define the nature of Dhvani.

## VI

The constitution of meaning in Indian poetics and Western criticism[8] shows fine distinctions and primarily on account of cognition, correlation, replacement, transformation, positional changes and modelised applicability of primary models and primary categories that we explain and illustrate the meaning. In Indian poetics, the method of allocating a series of correlated transformations to achieve an independent artistry is a basic feature and that is also properly fitted into the creative circumstances. The exact determination of realised enrichment is available in each immediate transforming event and in that way meaning is centralised interaction produced between the evolution of any category into the organisation of conceptual harmony. In this regard two issues clearly

find mention in our estimation of this problem. In the first place, the meaning is centralised in relation to the enrichment produced or created. And it is, in the second place, relative to the evolution of the same enrichment into an independence of the concerned artistic situation. Rasa, Dhvani, Riti, Guna an Alamkara provide specific answers to these problems.

In Rasa, primarily the transforming, situational prepositions and modelised categories become cyclically and circularly placed and in that way a functional orientation in relation to Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava, Sthayi Bhava, Sancari Bhava, Alambana and Uddipana is obtained. This situation is quiet unique in as much as each is developed into genuine and independent artistry. The question of obtaining circular and cyclical artistic situations remains one of the fundamental distinctions of Rasa system. It has two broad issues of the whole dispositional aggregate hence it is at the end of the scale that is graduated for the evolution and development of the categories. The nearest representation of this phenomenon is the comprehension of internationalised and formally the most creative experience. In Sringara for example, the Rati is compreheneded as an instrument, the medium, the environment and the text for every possible creative situations that may emerge. Such an event gives rise to remarkable artistic embodiments Vibhava being in the rainy season and Anubhava in either loveliness or beautifulness and Sancari Bhava in lust, nearly explain how the concept of total creative situation is illustrated as an event of a meaning that is universally developed in each of the above. This is a indication of the fact that Rasa is cyclical as well as circular in relation to the position it assumes in the idealised creative situations. There are advanced propositional correlations which always workout an adequate synthesis of the immediate environment, the artistic medium, the artistic object and the like. In Santa Rasa, for example Sam is the Sthayai Bhava, meditation in the form of concentrated involvement is the Vibhava and the feeling of ecstasy or delight in being one and all with universal is Anubhava. It could be seen that Sthyai Bhava, Vibhava and Anubhava in Santa are regularly harmonized as the methods of correlation and cognition because Sam essentially correlates the environment of Santa proposing the events of meditation and inward ecstasy to transform the same Santa into independent and genuine artistic situation.

This is the point that Rasa theory has put forth and it is the point of consideration that we have here, The obvious goal of rasa is not to propose transformation for the sake of an idealised experience but to establish this idealisation in the creation of independent, total, and the most enriched artistry. This is also the point at which Rasa immediately becomes better placed to deal with he artistry than most of the Western literary theories do. Abhinavagupta has the following observation to make in relation to Rasa:

> Rasa is that state of idealised universal disposition which is constituted out of transformation of Impersonal categorical standards
>
> परिमितस्वात्मा श्रयतानिभसिनाविस्हाच्च लौकिक प्रमदादि जनित निजरति शोकादिवत् चित्रंवृत्यन्तरजननाक्षमा अत एव निर्विघ्नसंवेदनात्मक विश्रान्तिलक्षणोन रसनापरपर्यायेण व्यापारेण गृहयमाणत्वाद रसशब्देनाभिधीयते।
>
> (*Abhinavabharati*, 15 : 428)

The point that Abhinavagupta is making is quiet understandably new approach to the understanding of artistic situation because he puts an emphasis on understanding Rasa.[9] In terms of relative impersonal categories and also in terms of two increasing modalised capabilities. Western literary theories do not propose any cohension in relation to the ability of creative construct to enter into a relative discrimination between correlating cognition and transformation and the like. Aristotle, for example, states that the process of imitations, in reality, an event in transformation of the sensation that is felt, and perceived in the image and symbol and therefore it is the action of two capital artistic situations on a secondary situation that is quiet ineffective in obtaining an enrichment for itself. Such a view indicates a suitable possibility of obtaining a change in the two models while models themselves are most immediate and temporarily established. Artistotle's position with regard to the transformation (say enrichment) of the emotions is exclusive to the evolution of the connecting feature or the apparatus that is in harmony with the immediate environment hence each category is optionally acted upon by the another category with a view to achieve the meaning that is external to the participating situations. In imitation theory this phenomenon is more powerfully felt because he considers imitation to be the event of genuine artistry in which an idealised transformation

takes place at the expense of external suitable medium and therefore there is neither any division of the artistry into artistry nor there is any independence created in terms of the involvement of the emotions while the process comes to an end. One of the differences that we could see between Rasa and Aristotle's poetic theory is that Aristotles does not constitute free an independent artistries rather he works out the procedural enrichment within the limits of total selection. This limitation on the part of Aristotle is unique and certain causes appear to be responsible for such a defect. Firstly the selective artistic environment and orthodox mode of enrichment applied on account of them in the second place, are creative of this fallacy. For example, consider the following observation:

> Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an Action that is serious, complete, and of Certain magnitude ... through pity & Fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions. (1993 : 23)

It is now seen that an enriched form is selectively assorted in two specified categorical mediums in the form of pity and fear. In other words we can say that the concretisation is preferentially opted for in the most relevant artistic situations and that is why emotions are enriched hence there is no genuine or total artistic situation. This problem is perhaps recurrent in Western criticism. The modern European literary theories like Structuralism and Deconstruction have made little progress in, estimating the evolution of a particular category. Ferdinand de Saussure (1976 : 104), for example, states the following proposition in relation to the language.

> A slice of sound which to the exclusion of everything that proceeds it and follows it in the spoken chain is the signifier of a certain concept.

We can now understand how evolution of a sound in relation to the evolution of other sounds creates a perspective for the prospect of making of the concept that is well ensuing that is the other way of putting up a case for selectional medium and equally selectional enrichment and in the end we get an optional and preferential mode to create optimum meaning in the sound construct. Indian position in this regard is more pertinent to the problem and it must be remarked that every category undergoes transformation only to create different artistic situations which

are genuine, independent and total. Visvanatha has stated that the experience of *Vibhava* is made totally in the sphere of trans-impersonal realisation and hence it is total in relation to the absolute, What infact is being stated is the total artistic potential inhering upon the Vibhava. So the difference between the evolution of a category, as proposed by de Saassure and Visvanatha is at once clear. The evolution of a category must transform all the existing artistic environments hence the question of selecting or preferentially modifying the,content does not simply arise. This argument brings to our notice an other important distinction that is there. In Indian approach the artistry is fundamentally an universal experience equated through different primary models and primary categories hence the transformation works as an induction in each. Western theories approach the problem as an immediate experience introduced generally through the selection of rich artistic contents.

Dhvani system, on the other hand, deals with the constitution and creation of genuine artistic environment with an emphasis on increasing universality on external and internal artistic situations. This conception is extensively significant because it takes into consideration each content, each construct, and each category to be participating in the event of enrichment and at the completion of process each emerges as universalised artistic situation. What is important in this is the appropriate positional and modealised statuses that it creates for the each hence universalisation of the artistry is felt in simultaneous cognition, propositional correlation and propositional transformation of Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava and Sancari Bhavas. It is in that way Dhvani system does not consider the evolution, or enrichment rather it always presents models of enrichment at the instance of idealised capacities of Sabda, Pada, Vakya, Bhava, Vibhava,[10] Anubhava and the like. Western theoretical position in this regard is precisely equalling the ideal contents, ideal construction, and ideal categories in the background of unstated environment and therefore when an ideal category enters into a combination with another category it merely equals without undergoing any transformation as such. We can, at least, think of, considering Eliot, Derrida and Barthes to substantiate the argument. Eliot (1951 : 185) his essay on 'Philip Massinger' observes :

> And, indeed, with the end of Chapman, Middleton, Webster, Tourneur, Donne we end a period when the intellect was immediately at the tips of the senses. Sensation become word and word was sensation

And Barthes (1991 : 194) restates the same proposition.

> Writing is precisely this loss of origin, this loss of motives to the profit of a volume of indetermination or over determination — this volume is precisely significance

And, finally Derrida (1991 : 119) has the following position to take :

> The movement of signification adds something, which results in the fact that there is always more but this edition is a floating one because it comes to perform a vicarious function to supplement a lack on the signified.

It could be seen that the artistic environment is constituted primarily on account of cumulative equality between the idealised contents of the categories, there is hardly any effort to understand the methodology of inter-transformation or intra-signification because of the fact that the artistry in. Western perspectives exists in the form of displaced wholeness and therefore the critics propose the idealisation of concrete situation in the different phases of this displacement. For Eliot the displacement is obtained in the word and sensation. For Barthes, it is in rapidly advancing concept and Derrida [11] sees it in the process of graduation of meaning itself. This is at the heart of western literary and critical understanding. Anandvardhana has a vastly different position in this context:

> Only that is admitted as a figure of suggestive poetry whose employment is rendered possible by just by the emotional suffusion of the poet and which does not require any other extra effort on his part.

रसाक्षिप्ततया यस्य बन्ध शक्यक्रियो भवेत्।
अपृथग्यत्ननिर्वर्त्य: सोऽलङ्कारो ध्वनौमत: ॥ (16 : II)

We can now comprehend how the artistic medium, the artistic object, and the external and internal creative environments are adopted in native

system of transformation hence both the categories word and the sense are exclusive in relation to the genuine situations which inheres upon them. What comes to be created because of that is an actualised wholeness in, relation to the total situations. We can now state the difference between Eliot, Barthes and Derrida and on the one hand and Anandavardhana on the other. The determination of primary categories, in Western conception is exclusive to the selection that a particular category makes amongst the immediately available enriched contents. Hence transformation in the artistry is substantiated merely as a forced immediacy which the Indian position is approximate to the achievement of the conceptual orientation of cognition, correlation modalisation and the transformation as Anandavardhana has so well stated.

## VII

The point is now well established that Indian critical systems like Rasa, and Dhavni [12] obtain an organised, well defined, and coherent approaches to the aspect of meaning. According to these systems the meaning is definable in terms of an expansion in the located contents, constructs and categories of the artistry and this expansion is, infact, an effect proper to proportional correlation, propositional transformation, suggestive replacement moderlised applicability, simultaneous cognition, and positional changes of Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Vibhava, Anubhava, Sancari Bhava, Sabda, Pada and Vakya. The effect therefore is creation of a divisible, genuine, independent, and universal artistry in each of the different stages of the artistic creation. Western criticism on the other hand has an altogether different methodology to approach the constitution of the meaning in the artistic situations. It considers the meaning to be an immediate enrichment in relation to the selected contents selected objects and the selected categories and therefore meaning is more or less a preferential mode of expansion. Such an event is available only in those instances within the category which become equal in relation to the acquisition of selected contents. Aristotle, Coleridge, Eliot, Richards, New Critics, de Saussure, Barthes and Derrida have more or less approximated to this position the only better thing that has been stated with some conviction is how the transformation could create an enriched equality amongst the preferred or selected contents.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The concept of meaning excludes the systematisation of secondary suggestive situations and that is how meaning remains a primordial factor in establishing a concept of organised expansion on the level of correlation of the categories and transformation of the artistic constructs and the contents.
2. Indian Poetics, however, sets forth the position that meaning is essentially a feature of the expansion which results as a correlation of the categories which enter into a cohesion with the universalisation of the external and internal artistic situations.
3. Western criticism, however, employs an indefinite standard in making the artistic construction a localised effect. There is a synthesis which does not differentiate the total artistic situation from the signified totality obtained in the whole artistry. Therefore the complete artistry is one which is total only in relation to signified arts.
4. The methods of correlation include inter-signification and inter-modelisation and, for that matter, *Rasa* and *Dhvani* appropriately create effects proper to such a situation.
5. In recognising the fact that organisation of the creative contents is basically an absolute purity which could be comprehended simultaneously with external and internal environment, *Rasa* and *Dhvani* create unique proposition.
6. Western critical theories decisively prove the point that the instance of presentative knowledge excludes the functional properties necessary to harmonise the totality obtained in each of the categories or diversions or even parts of the artistic situation. It is this feature of presentation that makes meaning a denied signification in the Western criticism.
7. *Dhvani* makes progressive correlation of the creative categories possible because it does not deal with any suggestive conception anywhere, rather it develops remarkable functions of transforming correlation in each of the various stages of the progress of artistry.
8. Conditions which identify prescribed function of developing universality in the artistry is, of course a concentration of actual comprehension of the knowledge. This knowledge is a basic method of enhancing the rate of expansion. Indian poetics offers valued reasons for such an aspect insofar as it develops structures of signification in the form of replacement, transformation, normativisation, reassessment, cognition and modelisation. In Western perspectives equivalent notations in any standardised artistic situation does not create any conducted content and for that matter emerging total situation forthrightly disclaims the full instance of enrichment.

9. *Rasa* and *Dhvani* make the artistry divisible into external and internal situations accordingly meaning becomes an expanded perspective in each. These two situations are exclusive occasions of evolution of an internalised enrichment.
10. The position and location of the categories like *Bhāva*, *Śabda*, *Pada* and *Vākya* on the one hand, and Experience Imagination Thought and Language on the other are remarkably different. Indian categories are organised around orderly universality while Western categories are occasional and situational.
11. Structuralism and Deconstruction do not help the matter much. In structuralism an emphasis is laid on expanding the sign, signifer and signified in verbal emotive and linguistic discourses while Deconstruction reduces these structures of signification to obtain a new extension in each occasion of seeming totality and therefore the phenomenon is never complete. In both, meaning is not accepted as a total development of the artistry rather it is a feature of dislocation in either the expansion of the sign signifier and signified or reduction of these.
12. In *Rasa*, there is a continuous division of the artistry and each division is total and universal. *Bhāva*, for example, is a complete artistry because it is signified, contextualised, transformed, cognised, correlated and even modelised in proportion to the contextual mediums it creates.

## WORKS CITED

Abhinavagupta. 1960. *Abhinavabharati.* Trans. Ed. Acharya Viveheshwara. Delhi: University of Delhi Press.

Aeschylus. 1933. 'Prometheus Bound' in *World Drama.* Editor. Barret H. Clark, New York: Dover Publications.

Anandavardhana. 1985. *Dhvanyaloka.* Trans. K. Krishnamoorti. Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Das.

Aristotle. 1993. *Poetics.* Trans. S. H. Butcher. 1993. Ludhiyana : Kalyani Press.

Barthes, Roland. 1957. *Element of Semiology.* Trans. Annette Lavers & Colin Smith. Lond: Johnathan Cape.

Bharat Muni. *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Vol. I & II). Trans./Ed. Madhusudan Shastri Kashi: Kashi Hindu Vishwavidyalaya.

Bhartrahari 1963. *Vākyapadīyam* with the commentary Ambakartri by Raghunath Sharma (Vol. I, II & III). Varanasi: Varanasi Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya.

Bhasa. 1958. 'Svapanavasavadattam' in *Sanskrita Kavyadhara.* Trans./Ed. Pandit Rahul Sanskrityayana. Delhi: Kitab Mahal.

Brooks, Cleanth *The Well Wrought Urn.*

Browning, Robert. 1998. *The Poetical Works*. Ed. Tim Cook. Hertfordshire: The Wordsworth Poetry Library.

Coleridge. 1973. *Biographia Literaria*, (Vol. II.) Ed. J. Shawcross London, Oxford University Press.

Dante. 1980. *Purgatorio* (Temple Classics). London: J. M. Dent

De Saussure, Ferdinand. 1976. *A Course in General Linguistics*. Trans. Wade Baskin. London : Fontana Books.

Derrida, Jacques. 1991. *Of Grammatology*. Trans. Gayatri C. Spivak. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Dey, S. K. 1959. *Some Problems of Sanskrit Poetics*. Calcutta: Firma KLM.

—. 1960. *History of Sanskrit Poetics*. Calcutta: Firma KLM

Donne, John. 1941. *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose* Ed. John Tillibiyer. New York: The Modern Library.

Eliot, T. S. 1951. *Selected Essays* London: Faber & Faber.

—. 1962. *Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley*. London: Faber & Faber.

Euripides. 1986. 'Hippolytus' in *Three Great Place of Euripides*. Trans. Rex Warner. New York: Mentor Classics.

Keats, John. 1972. *Poetical Works*. Editor. H. W. Garrod. London: Oxford University Press.

Lodge, David, 1991. *Modern Criticism and Theory*. Longman: London & New York.

Mahimbhatta. 1973. *Vyaktiviveka*. Varanasi; Chowkhambha Sanskrit Sansthan.

Mammata. *Kāvyaprakāśa*. 1975. Trans & Ed. Sir G. N. Jha. New Delhi: Bharitya Vidya Prakashan.

Marvell, Andrew. 1995. *The Poetical Works*. Ed. Andrew Crozier. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Poetry Library.

Milton John. 1931. 'Samson Agonistes' in the *Works of John Milton*. Vol. I. New York: Columbia University Press.

Rajshekhara. 1986. *Kāvyamīmaṁsā*. Trans. & ed. Pt. Kedarnath Sharma. Patna: Bihar Rashatrabhasha Parishad.

Ransom, John Crowe. 1984. *Selcted Essays*. Editors. Young and Hindle. London: Lousiana Univ. Press.

Richards. I. A. 1955. *Principles of Literary Criticism*. London; Routledge & Kegan Paul.

—, 1956. *Coleridge on Imagination*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Shakespeare, William. 1984. *The Illsutrated Startford Shakespeare*. New York: Exter Books.

Sudraka. *'Mricchakaṭikam'* in *Sanskrit Kāvyadharā*. Trans. & Ed. Pandit Rahul 1958 Sanskrityayana. Delhi: Kitab Mahal (Parts I, II, III).

Tate, Allen. 1948. 'On the Limits of Poetry', *Selected Essays 1928-1948*. New York: Swallow Press.

Vishwanatha. 1998. *Sāhityadarpaṇam*. Trans. Pandit Seshraj Sharma Regmi. New Delhi: Krishnadas Academy.

Wordsworth, William. 2000. *Poetical Works*. London: Oxford University Press.

Yeats, William Butler. 1991. *The Poems*, ed. Daniel Albright. London: J. M. Dent & Sons.

*Binu Zachariah*

# FICTIONAL CHARACTERIZATIONS OF CHRIST ACROSS CULTURES

This paper attempts to study the portrayal of Christ in select texts in contemporary Malayalam, Greek and Portuguese literature with emphasis on the socio-cultural implications of such portrayals, especially with regard to censorship. My criterion for selection of texts is based on a particular category known as "fictionalizing biographies" [1] which may be defined as a category of literary works that deal with the characterization of the historical Jesus, in order to distinguish these from other texts that deal with Christ figures.

Kerala, as such, has a strong Christian tradition, which was there even before the arrival of the western missionaries, starting with the Portuguese missionaries in the 16th century. This powerful tradition reacted vehemently when a play called *Krishuvinte Aaram Thirumurivu* [2] or *The Sixth Holy Wound of Christ* by P. M. Antony was staged in 1986. This play was based on the Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis' controversial novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ* [3]. There were calls, especially by the various churches in Kerala to ban the play and leading this crusade was the Catholic Church, whose representatives felt that this play depicted an unbiblical Christ, a weak and unsteady character, who is wont to yield to temptations, especially sexual ones, at least at a mental level. But there were others, mostly literary figures, who questioned the Church's right to cramp an individuals' freedom of literary expression. This tug of war between custodians of religious/communitarian sentiments and freedom of expression, received tremendous coverage, which in a way publicized the play.

It was not as though there were no earlier works that dealt with the Christ-character. In fact the genre to which Antony's play belongs, 'bible drama', deals with plays that have a biblical theme, usually based on the events and incidents in the Gospels. A good example of this is the critically acclaimed drama *Kalvariyile Kalpapadakam* [4] or *The*

*Celestial Tree at Calvary* by Kainikkara Padhmanabha Pillai. Here Judas does not willingly betray Christ, but is forced to do so by his sister Judith, a creation of the author's imagination. The Church did not have any problems with this play, because although it differs from the betrayal incident as seen in the Bible, the character of Christ adheres to biblical descriptions. This seems to show that controversies are largely generated not by a work of art in its totality, but by the portrayal of the character/s in it, especially if that character happens to be the most important source of identity for a particular community. Antony's play became controversial because he reshaped the character of the God of this community in a way that the community found difficult to accept. The community did not have any problem when Padmanabha Pillai made the betrayer of their God innocent of his crime. Antony is part of this community, and therefore he must have felt that he can take the freedom of subverting or recreating the character of this community's God. Things would perhaps have become difficult and may be even nasty if Padmanabha Pillai had written something like *The Sixth Holy Wound of Christ*. But he himself says : "I ventured towards such a production only after doing a deep and careful study of the historicity involved in these matters." [5] He even verified his study with prominent theologians. Antony would never have felt the need to do something like this, because he is writing about his God ... he is an insider while Padmanabha Pillai is an outsider. While the outsider's artistic imagination and freedom of expression were gracefully accepted, Antony's was questioned by the Christian leaders of the time.

After a lot of legal complexities, Antony's play was banned by the Kerala High Court on the basis that "The portrayal of Jesus in the drama does not have the support of any of the Gospels ... If anyone creates a story of Jesus repudiating what is given in the Gospels, that itself will outrage the religious beliefs and feelings of Christians..." and therefore this play is an 'objectionable performance' that is "deliberately intended to outrage the religious feelings of any class of the citizens of India by insulting or blaspheming or profaning the religion or religious beliefs of that class" according to the Kerala Dramatic Performance Act, 1961. [6]

Almost a decade later, came a novelette and a couple of short stories by renowned writer Paul Zachariah, which too did not conform to the story line of the Gospels. But this time around, there were hardly any

calls for prohibition. In Zachariah's works we see Christ purely as a human being. Not much importance is given to his divinity. Christ here is unsure of his calling as the Saviour of Mankind. Zachariah questions the rationale behind Christ's birth in the story *Aarkariyam*[7] or *Who Knows?* This story is located amidst the slaughter of infants, so ordered because King Herod of Israel felt threatened about the birth of the Saviour, the future King of Jews. The divinity of Christ's birth seems to be unpromising when the author describes that quite ironically the birth of the Saviour of Mankind, who shed his blood to wash away the sins of mankind, had to be at the cost of the most tender and most innocent of all human blood. In yet another of his short stories, *Kannadi Kaanmolavum*[8] or *Till You Face a Mirror*, Zachariah presents a Christ who seems to be suffering from an inferiority complex and does not want to see his reflected self. Zachariah portrays Christ's dilemma and anxiety that he the Prince of the Kingdom of Heaven, is not fit to be the Saviour of mankind, by depicting Jesus' uneasiness to look at his reflection. That his Christ is not the ever confident and self-reliant Son of God found in the Bible is what the author is proclaiming. Christ knows all about the kingdom of heaven. But he can't seem understand why this kingdom cannot put an end to his own family's sufferings! He feels that he is only an ordinary human being — impure, imperfect but definitely human. This seems to be the major point that Zachariah attempts to drive home. The novelette, *Enthundu Visesham Pilathose?*[9] or *What News Pilate?* is another of his works where Zachariah highlights the humanness' of Christ. Here we find a Christ who does not know why he has risen from the dead. The concept of resurrection, which assumes prime importance in Christianity, is trivialized here.

It is important to note that the Church has remained relatively silent on these recent unbiblical literary portrayals of Christ. Zachariah himself says that his works do not create any problems for the Church because it knows that a majority of its members do not read him : "The Church has become very media-savvy in its way of promoting things. So it does not bother whether I attack Christ or anyone else so long as I don't threaten the Church's wealth and power."[10] Zachariah claims that his portrayals of Christ are only attempts to come to terms with Christianity, the religion into which he was born and not an attempt to negate the Church's authority. Perhaps the church remained silent

because it did not want to unintentionally promote something that a lot of people would have missed anyway. May be Zachariah's works did not attract much attention because in contemporary times, it is films and to a certain extent, plays that are more popular than books due to various economic, temporal and entertainment-based reasons. Visual art-forms reach a wider audience. They are more directly mimetic and graphic. And so it seems more necessary for power structures to debar the entry of such art-forms because here, the faith of a greater audience is supposedly under risk of being endangered.

Nevertheless, what is to be noted is that fictional depictions of Christ, regardless of the literature in which they appear, always seem to face censorship problems. The Greek novels it Nikos Kazantzakis' *The Last Temptation of Christ* and the Portuguese writer Jose Saramago's *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* [11] are two examples of this. For believers all over the world, the Gospels in the Bible represent the authentic and canonical Christ. This may be one of the reasons why believers find it difficult to accept a fictional representation of Christ like Kazantzakis' Christ or Saramago's Christ, which though based partly on the biblical Gospels, may be read as being rooted in the respective author's contexts.

Kazantzakis' perception of God, which is vital for us as far *The Last Temptation of Christ* is concerned, may be stated as follows :

> ...a process in being, a natural force of great creative potential ...God is as dependent on man as man is upon Him ; to save himself, man must first save God ; the fight is unequal, the results seemingly ordained — neighter man nor God, nor the two fighting together can save themselves. Knowing this but continuing to struggle man discovers his dignity, becomes himself a kind of God. [12]

Kazantzakis therefore seems to be arguing that man must also try to be God's saviour. His portrayal of Christ in the novel is based, to a very large extent, on his comprehension of this symbiotic relationship between God and man as mentioned above. Kazantzakis was always regarded as an anti-establishment figure in Greece largely due to his constant support of the cause of demoticism as opposed to the government's hostility towards the language of Crete. It seems that he lost the Nobel Prize in 1952 by one vote, mainly because the Greek government was

against sponsoring his candidature. The publication of *The Last Temptation of Christ* only heightened Kazantzakis' image as a controversial writer. While the novel was placed on the Roman Catholic 'Index of Forbidden Texts', Kazantzakis himself was excommunicated from the Greek Orthodox Church.

The Christ who appears in the early pages of this novel is a man who wants to remain as man, "to taste the simples of human joys" and this includes the fulfillment of his sexual desires. Even when he is forced to leave behind all his worldly passions, to go in search of his destiny — to become the Messiah — the longings of the flesh still haunt him. This quest can be linked with Kazantzakis own journey in search of salvation. Born in 1883 in Crete, into a peasant household, Kazantzakis lived among the shepherds and fishermen who often colour his literary canvas. The revolt against the Turks in 1887, forced him to be evacuated to Naxos where he had his schooling by Franciscan monks, and it was here that he was introduced to Christ, the Saviour. But it seems there was always a dilemma within him between the passion for an active life and an underlying urge for a mature, sober asceticism and caught in this conflict he was influenced by several saviours — Nietzsche, Buddha, Lenin, Odysseus, etc.

*The Last Temptation of Christ* may be seen as Kazantzakis' return to the saviour he first met at Naxos. It is a re-telling of the story of Jesus as found in the Bible, the major difference being that Christ is delinked from the Bible; he's dissociated of his divine aura which for Kazantzakis, seems to limit his human ordinariness. Kazantzakis definition of the divinity of Christ occupies a realm that is always within the reach of man. And this human Christ overcomes all his mundane temptations on the cross and dies just like how God wanted him to.

Jose Saramago, on the other hand, does not seem to be overly concerned about highlighting the divine capabilities of man. According to Saramago :

> My Gospel tries to fill the blank spaces between the various episodes of Jesus' life as narrated in other gospels — with some interpretations of my own. [13]

Whenever an author pens the Christ-story, one always tends to think about how new or how different this is going to be from the Gospel

story of Christ. Saramago's novel answers this question is an interesting way, when other than the Christ-Magdalene relationship, the author projects God as someone who rejects the Devil's plea to forgive him for His own selfish purposes :

> I neither accept nor pardon you, I much prefer you as you are and were it possible, I'd much prefer you to become even worse than you are ... Because the Good that I represent cannot exist without the Evil you represent ... for me to be Goodness, it is essential that you should continue to be evil. [ Pp. 299, 300 ]

As the above lines indicate, the novel attempts to view the story of Christ and in turn Christianity, by keeping the concepts of good and evil in a reciprocal relationship, mainly by picturing a concerned and reasonable Devil as opposed to a power hungry and dictatorial God, for whom his Son pleads : "Men, forgive Him, for He knows not what He has done." The 'good-evil' role reversal is one of the most important aspects of this novel that traces the life of Christ right from his very conception till his crucifixion. Saramago's 'interpretation of his own' include the above mentioned good-evil role reversal, Christ's introduction to carnal pleasures via Magdalene and lengthy 'business' discussions between God, Christ and the Devil with regard to future matters, especially the rise of Christianity as a major religious power.

In a country like Portugal, where Roman Catholicism has a strong influence in socio-political matters, it is not surprising that these so called 'interpretations' of Saramago were frowned upon. But the major attempts to censure the text came when the Portuguese Under Secretary of State, Sousa Lara, ventured towards deleting the novel from appearing for the European Union literary contest. Sousa's contention was that the book had deeply offended Roman Catholic religious convictions. Although the book was allowed for the contest, Saramago was disturbed by what happened; he left Portugal to settle in Canary Islands in Spain. The novel as such leads us to a lot of interesting points, all of them crucial in making the story here, different from the one in the Bible. Here, God forces Jesus to accept his role as the Messiah of what will in future, become the largest religion in the world — Christianity. Jesus does not want to accept this role because he feels that God is doing this only

to become "the god of more people". And God does tell Jesus that in order for this to come true, Jesus himself will have to be a martyr, following which there will be several others whose names God reveals when he begins "a litany in alphabetical order ... an endless tale of iron and blood, of fire and ashes, an infinite sea of sorrow and tears ..." [ p. 291 ] But there will also be several others, who won't face painful deaths, but live painful lives :

> They will [ also ] mortify the flesh with suffering and blood and grime, and innumerable other penances, with hair shirts and flagellation, there will even be some who will scarcely ever wash and others who will throw themselves onto brambles and roll in the snow to suppress their carnal desires ... an endless procession of people, thousands upon thousands of men and women throughout the world entering convents and monasteries ... There they will remain to serve you and Me from morning until night, with vigils and prayers, all with the same mission and destiny, to worship us and to die with our names on their lips. [ Pp. 294, 295 ]

God promises future glory and power to Jesus in exchange for his co-operation so as to make this Him, the present Jewish god, a global God. One is reminded here of Satan's temptation of Jesus in the Bible, where he too promises Jesus, power and glory.

Why is God depicted as a power-lusting dictator, who doesn't seem to mind the bloodshed that is going to happen in Christianity? Why is the Devil who is called Pastor here, pictured as 'good', while God appears to be 'evil'? Why is Jesus an 'unwilling saviour' and in effect why is there an attempt to show that the biggest religion in the world was founded on a 'bargain'? All these points are vital in our understanding of the novel as a whole rather than dismissing it as blasphemous writing. We will be aided in this if we take a cursory glance at the contextual background of Saramago and also Portugal, especially with regard to religious aspects.

Portugal's tryst with democracy did not begin until the later quarter of this century. Till then it was by and large an autocrat governed nation. Before the 20th century, when the Church and the Crown were often united, Christianity or rather Roman Catholicism was a major power block. Prior to Portugal becoming a republic in 1910, Roman Catholicism was the religion of the State. This power may have diminished in the

present century, especially after the rise of Antonio Salazar after 1926. Under Salazar's reign, Portugal became an

> 'Estrada Nova' (New State), a subdued Catholic version of a fascist regime.... In a changing world, the Portuguese dictatorship stood out in its grim and eerie immobility. Backed, cowed into submission, a European country was ruled by senile generals and admirals, by a swarm of spies and by a band of faceless bureaucrats all under the rod of a terrible old man. The social landscape seemed unalterable. Religion and official ideology were presented as immutable factors with obedience as the highest virtue. [14]

Even after the fall of Salazar, Roman Catholicism has enjoyed being the premier religion in a state that is considered to be secular in nature. Two important documents relating to religious freedom, the 1971 Law on Religious Freedom and the 1940 Concordat between Portugal and the Holy See, grants several privileges to the Roman Catholic Church that are not enjoyed by other religions. An example of this is the exemption of tax for the Roman Catholic Church from the country's value added tax, whereas other religions can be exempted only from those expenditures directly related to religion. It was only in 1999 that a new law on religious freedom was drafted and introduced in the National Assembly, which would enable minority religions to enjoy more of the privileges that were earlier the monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church. All these factors seem to give an indication of the presence of Christianity/Roman Catholicism in matters of the State.

That Jose Saramago was at loggerheads with the Church is evident from the fact that he was criticized by a Vatican newspaper even on the day he won the Nobel Prize for literature. Saramago had won this coveted award in 1998, and in the midst of accolades from the Portuguese President, Jorge Sampaio and the Prime Minister, Antonio Guterres, the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano* felt that someone like Saramago, 'an old school communist' with a 'substantially anti-religious vision' did not deserve the Nobel Prize.

Born in 1922 in Azinhaga, Portugal, Saramago was involved in publishing and translation activities for a long time. His first novel *Country of Sin* was published in 1947. His next work came well after

the toppling of the Salazar regime. This was *Manuel de Pintura E Caligrapha* published in 1977. That he was against the dictatorial rule of Salazar is evident from his joining the Communist Party of Portugal (which secretly opposed Salazar) in 1969. But the power of the Church is evident here too, when Sarmago, on accusing the Under Secretary of State for censorship, was reminded by his colleagues in the Communist Party that censorship was an accepted fact in the Soviet Union and other Communist nations. But it is to be noted that *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* is not the first book where Saramago criticizes the Christian establishment. In *Baltazar and Blimunda*, Saramago depicts the harsh and cruel reality of the Inquisition set in the Lisbon of 1711. Saramago makes a point about the Inquisition in this novel too. He describes it as the "Tribunal of the Holy Office." In the novel, we find God mentioning to Jesus about the Inquisition as a necessary evil :

> The Inquisition is a police force, a tribunal, and will, therefore, pursue, judge and sentence its enemies ... to prison, exile, the stake ... thousands upon thousands of men and women will be burnt at the stake. They will be burnt alive because they have believed in you, others because they will doubt you. [ Pp. 298 ]

A close reading of *The Gospel according to Jesus Christ*, without looking at the various contextual factors surrounding it may induce one to think that the text is blasphemous in tone and nature. The depiction of the love making scene between Jesus and Magdalene, and God being shown as a tyrant, lusting for power, blood and martyrdom so as to further strengthen His omnipotence, may make any believer flinch. The novel may appear to be anti-religious, but I think that this anti-religiosity stems from Saramago's attempt to question the authoritarian structurality of the Church. The author traces the beginnings of this Church through the words of God Himself who explains to Jesus :

> There will be a Church ... a religious society which will be founded by you or in your name ... and this Church will be spread far and wide throughout the world and will be called catholic ... but in order to be truly solid its foundations will be dug out in flesh, and the bases made from the the cement of abnegation, tears, suffering, torment, every known conceivable form of death known or as yet unrevealed. [ Pp. 289, 290 ]

The dictatorial God in the novel may be equated with this structurality and the author's attempts to reverse the concepts of good and evil may be so because everything associated with the Church was persuaded to be looked upon as good. By and large, the centrality of the Church remains unquestioned even with regard to the Portugal of today. A United States government report on international religious freedom with reference to Portugal, states that

> The Catholic Church has exclusive control over the naming of military, prison, and hospital chaplains ... Public secondary school curriculums include an optional course called "religion and morals". This course functions as a survey of world religions and is taught by a lay person. It can be used to give Catholic religious instruction. The Catholic Church must approve all teachers for this course. [15]

We therefore see that there is an attempt by the Catholic Church in Portugal to shape the general Portuguese attitude and way of life according to its own dogmas and principles. Saramago's work may thus be better understood when we study it from the perspective of the influence of the Church on the general Portuguese culture. This is quiet implicit in the 'gap' in Jesus' life that Saramago attempts to fill. The figure of the despotic God in the novel may be equated as symbolizing the authority of the Church. But that Saramago attempted to attack the Church rather than God may be inherent in the following lines :

> ...sin and the Devil are one and the same thing, What thing, asked Jesus, My absence, How do you explain Your absence, is it because You retreat or because mankind abandons You, I never retreat, never, Yet You allow men to abandon You, Whosoever abandons Me comes looking for Me, and when they cannot find You, I suppose You blame the Devil, No, he's not to blame, I'm to blame because I'm incapable of reaching out to those who seek Me, words uttered by God with a poignant and unexpected melancholy, as if He had suddenly discovered the limitations of His power. [ Pp. 295 ]

Thus the portrayal of Christ, God, Devil etc., here may be seen as signifiers that aim towards a criticism of the centrality of the Church.

Often fictional depictions of Christ in literature become problematic for a believer, when the divinity of Christ is negated through a highlighting of his sexuality, so as to priorities his humanness. And

often, it is this aspect that leads to censorship of such texts. Whenever the censorship controversy erupts, we have, as mentioned earlier, two stances — those who support censorship, which include religious leaders, and those who oppose it, which generally comprise the literati. The debate between these two, with regard to who is right and who is wrong, often remain unresolved. Rather than plunge into the uncertainty of this tug of war, it may perhaps be better if we understand a certain kind of politics that operates whenever the question of censorship of texts is raised.

Generally, works of art, especially books, become controversial when they are chosen for awards. Saramago was so upset that there was an attempt to block the entry of *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* for the European Union literary contest, that he shifted base from his native Portugal to Spain. We see that Kazantzakis lost the Nobel Prize by one vote, as the Greek government did not support his candidacy. Perhaps *The Last Temptation of Christ* would not have run into censorship problems of Kazantzakis was not regarded as a radical anti-establishment figure in Greece. Having been based on *The Last Temptation of Christ,* a novel which was already placed on the Roman Catholic Index of Forbidden Texts, *The Sixth Holy Wound of Christ* was bound to face sharp criticism by the churches in Kerala. And the fact that the Opposition in Kerala, which was against the prohibition of the play, changed its opinion and banned the play once it gained power after the Assembly elections, clearly indicate that banning works of art that focus on the depiction of Christ, is based less on the unbiblical discrepancies that may be found in such works. However, it is to be noted that if these discrepancies are often quoted as reasons for censorship, there is a definite lack of uniformity here.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Theodore Ziolkowski, *Fictional Transfigurations of Jesus* (Princeton Princeton UP: 1972), pp. 13-17.
2. P. M. Antony, *Kristhuvinte Aaram Thirumurivu* (New Delhi: Indian Athetist Publications 1988.
3. Nikos, Kazantzakis, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, trans. P. A. Bien (New York: Touchstone 1960).

4. Kainikkara Padmanabha Pillai, *Kalvariyile Kalpapadakam* (Kottayam: National Books 1984).
5. *Ibid.*, Foreword, p. 9.
6. Based on Court documents. 1987 (1) K. L. T. 132. P. M. Antony versus District Collector and others, p. 133.
7. Paul Zachariah, "Aarkariyam". *Thiruvezhuthukal*, ed Naushad (Kozhikode: Mulberry 1996).
8. Paul Zachariah, *Kannadi Kaamolavum* (Kottayam, D. C. Books 1997).
9. Paul, Zachariah, *Enthundu Visesham Peelathose?* (Kottayam: D. C. Books, 1997).
10. Paul Zachariah, personal interview, 6 Jan 2000.
11. Jose Saramgo, *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ*, trans. Giovanni Pontiero (London: Harvill, 1993).
12. Morton P. Levitt, *The Cretan Glance* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1980), p. 12.
13. Jose Saramago, *Op. Cit.*
14. Michael Harsgor, *The Washington Papers: Portugal in Revolution* (Beverly Hills/London: Sage Publications, 1976), p. 5.
15. *U. S. Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 1999: Portugal.* Released by the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Washington D. C., 9 September 1999.

*Nilanjan Chakrabarti*

# INTERPRETING TRAVEL LITERATURE: A STUDY OF FRENCH TRAVEL NARRATIVES ON INDIA

In our study of narratives written by French travellers in India, the issue which primarily preoccupies us is that of otherness. Travel narratives are organised and articulated around the problematic that it is the traveller's eye which envisages the other while it is again through his narrative that the otherness is translated. When one talks about the other, the difference is regarded as fundamental between the self and the other. The narrator belongs to a particular group and he talks about another human group to the members of his own community. There is one world which is that of the narrator in which the other is described and there is another which is discussed and which makes the object of that description. These two worlds are irreconcilable and cannot be brought into harmony with each other. The narrator is confronted with the problem of convincingly introducing the world he visits to another with which he is ontologically associated. In order to translate the differences between these two, the narrator makes use of the process of inversion which opposes the other to the self. The otherness which is constructed by this method is thus made transparent and comprehensible to the reader. A new rapport is established between the self and the other, in fact between the self and that which is contrary to the self. It is not an ontologically given difference and therefore it is not fundamentally inaccessible. Rather the other is posed as the negative identity of the self. The other cannot be studied, neither can it be understood and judged without an active intervention of the self. This amounts to the statement that the other is what I am not. Francois Hartog [1] argues that this principle of inversion is a means by which otherness is communicated and envisaged as the inversed self. [1]

To the French travellers in India during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries India reflects this negative and opposite image of the self. In travellers like Tavernier, Bernier or Abbe' Carre' India

vehicles images of an immutable, sclerotic, impermeable and despotic society contrasting with the French culture and society marked by their dynamism, their historical evolution, their ideal of liberty and open-mindedness. To these travellers India is characterised by the obsession of permanence, by fossilized customs, by the recalcitrant attitude towards change and by the sclerosis of tradition. Such images of India diffused by the French travellers imply that the source culture is nothing but the inverse of the target culture. If Tavernier discovers the feminine essence of the Indians civilization which makes it submit to the external aggression, isn't it because for him this femininity stands in comparison/ contrast to the masculinity of the West which sends to alien coasts the conquerors of the world?

Tavernier writes with a deriding tone about the Hindu and Muslim penitents. His sense of western logic and rationality is profoundly perturbed at the spectacle of the rushing crowd bringing nourishment to these parasite good-for-nothings and at the sight of this poor, filthy creature commanding everyone's veneration. Tavernier gives the description of the leader of the fakirs who is marching with his company with a heavy chain attached to his foot in order to mortify his body, bearing a false appearance of gravity and commanding mass adulation.

> Furthermore he drags a heavy chain which he has attached to his foot, long enough and thick to the proportion. When he is praying, it is with a big noise that be makes with his chain and with his loud voice accompanied by feigned gravity attracting people's veneration. And the people are feeding him and his company, serving them food wherever they stop. [2]

It would have been normal, rational and logical that the people scoff at his feigned devotion, that being repulsed by his ugly exterior they avoid frequenting him. But it is the contrary that happens. Tavernier's French rationality is confronted with an alien illogicality. The behaviours of the fanatical devouts displaying their reverence to this filthy creature appears to him to be absolutely bereft of logic.

In Tavernier's references to the animism in practice among the Indians the juxtaposition of rational and irrational can be noticed. Tavernier is surprised at the sight at the idolaters paying homage to man as well as to wild animals, to monsters and to objects without life.

Indians look at these animals and objects animated with the same spirit and throbbing with the same life. It is irrational behaviour foregrounding a contradiction from the point of view of western rationality. But the illogicality of Indian polytheism is soon brought within the ambit of western monotheism by the author.

> Although the idolaters of India pay the same respect to the creature as well as to cow, to a monkey and to a variety of monsters, that which should be reserved only for the true Divinity, it is certain that they recognize only one infinite God all powerful and wise, the creator of heaven and earth and who fills every things with his presence. [3]

The "although" (Bienque) at the beginning of the sentence opposes in an implicit way the Indian system of belief and Tavernier's own belief pertaining to the divinity. Exposing oneself to such an idea and imbibing its inflame, its influence derails the rational faculties in man. But nurturing such an idea of the divinity does not prevent the Indian from conceiving the image of an all powerful and omnipresent God which conforms to that found in the Western scripture. Irrationality is rectified but provisionally as the frenzied imagination (folk imagination) holds its sway over the Indian mind, exaggeratedly credulous, which sinks into an irrational insanity endowing a motionless stone with divine properties. Indians, according to Tavernier absolutely believe in it. Even the most enlightened among them do not heed the voice of reason.

> As perhaps they heard that the round figure is the most perfect of the figures they reaffirmed their belief saying the God has an oval figure, and it is for this reason that they commonly have in their temples an oval shaped stone which they bring from the Ganges and which they venerate as God. They are so deeply entrenched in that mad belief that the wisest among the Brahmines do not want to listen to any contrary reasoning. [4]

Another example of hierarchical report can be taken form Abbe' Perrin's *Voyage dans l'Indostan* (1785). Perrin gives a detailed description of architectural style of India and European houses. The common Indian houses are poorly constructed. That the Indians take little care about the construction and maintenance of their houses is explained by the fact that they always live in the fear of being evicted without notice since the land on which they lived belonged to the prince. Houses in

the cities do not show good taste neither aesthetically, nor are they convenient and comfortable. By their dinginess they resemble a dimly lit prison where the dwellers will be buried alive under the crushing mass of roughly-cut stones.

> "...the splendour of structure in India resides in enormous size of materials utilized for its construction. A palace is reputed magnificent when it is built with blocks of stones measuring twenty five to thirty feet in length even though they do not look delicate and finished. Thus they pile up rocks at a very high cost and take pride in being buried alive under their weight." [5]

But nothing in Indian edifices can equal the elegance, the refinement and the charm of the European houses. They are marked by their cleanliness, by a very sensible architectural style, by their solidity capable of resisting all sorts of erosion and damages. The convents built by their capuchins and the Jesuits testify to their solidity. During the siege of Pondicherry by the English these two buildings were very badly damaged. Everybody apprehended their imminent collapse. But as peace returned the structure was reerected without the original edifice being reduce to dust. According to Perrin, European edifices constitute a space of safety, tranquility, pleasure, ecstasy and amiability which is in sharp contrast with the heat, the animosity, the inconvenience and the ferocity of the external environment.

In fact the French travellers in India become users of stereotypes and make a simplistic description of the target culture. They flatly thrust a mould on it. That mould can hardly contain the reality of the culture. The stereotyped representation results in the dilution and simplification of the density of that reality. It is often noticed that when an individual lives in an alien environment he discovers himself more. His displacement, bring him closer to his roots. He has often a deep and sharp feeling of being the depository of cultural patrimony which firmly establishes his identity. In French travellers in India stereotypes which surreptitiously find their way into the narrative reinforce the self rather than highlight the other. Talking about Indians in their narratives they shape themselves as their opposite. By referring to the despotism of the Indian princes they in fact insist upon the liberal political system in France. Their criticism of Indian superstitious spirit implies the logical and scientific

spirit of the westerners. It is a consciously directed selective cognition of the other. This stereotyped representation diluting the density and reducing the complexity of the reality occurs owing to conscious omissions, to simple oblivion or to simple ignorance.

These stereotypes pretend to define reality in a few traits without taking exceptions into consideration. This result in a linear description of that reality. Stereotypes do not allow the shades of nuances to crytallise in that reality. Let us take the example of Jean-Baptiste Chevalier. In course of his travel he discovers in man and in nature nothing but harmful forces always ready to trap him or to conspire against him in order to thwart his plans of conducting flourishing commercial activities in Assam. At every step in his courage and determination are put to test to fight against the odds and opposition which constitute the Indian reality for him. For Chevalier the milieu he encounters becomes univocal and loses its multifarious facets. His obsession of an aggressive other prompts him to look for means to dominate it and to follow a policy of counter-aggression.

Chevalier sets himself the aim of founding a French establishment in the kingdom of Assam. He gets demoralised at the steadfast refusal of the royal council to accord him this privilege. He promises to the king to provide him with military assistance, with arms and with well trained soldiers with the hope of obtaining permission to carry out freely his commercial activities. The proud and haughty attitude displayed by Chevalier on many occasions gradually wanes. He becomes a prey to affiliation and incertitude when the prince, who is temporality discharging the duties of his father who is out on a military campaigne does not allow Chevalier to leave the kingdom. Chevalier describes his state of internment in the following terms.

> The more these circumstances made me suffer the more obviously it delayed my departure. But what was afflicting me the more was the fact that I was constantly plunged into the cruelest incertitude about the aim I had in view. I concealed nonetheless my anxieties and answered that as His Majesty wanted me to wait for his return, I would submit to his will with joy.[6]

The image of the hostile "Other" is expressed through he description of the narrator's sensory experiences. The authority of the text resides

in Chevalier's effort to authentize his narrative with the description of his intensely lived physical and mental experiences. The abundance of the pronouns "Je" (first person singular number in French) expresses the anchorage of the text in narrators intensely lived personal painful adventures. Chevalier's narration aims at sensitizing the reader to his physical hardship and to his mental sufferings. The despair, the anxiety, the anger, the struggle against fiery water currents in the river, against mortal physical degeneration, against inclement weather are experiences which the traveller's mind and body undergo. Events are constituted by these experiences. His journal abounds in the type of description we are gong to cite.

> "Sand beds which frequently come into the way made us perish almost ten times during the day. My bazara remained during an hour hanging on a tree trunk hidden in the depth of the water. Many times it almost capsized. At last after a long struggle I succeeded in saving it. All the day long we had to fight against water currents of unbelievable fierceness." [7]

The travellers finds himself surrounded by a primitive, savage nature which has not yet been overpowered by man. This nature by its wild, hostile and crushing aspect appears to shake the courage and resolve of the most intrepid of explorers.

> "Approaching these mountain makes the most resolute of the navigators shudder in fear. Coasts bristle with sharp-edged rocks jutting into the river. We had a lot of difficulties in ensuring our safety and could avoid the danger only after taking all possible precautions." [8]

The image of India propagated by these narratives of French travellers appear to be a discursive construction or a textural production. These images seem to be self generating as they have a tenuous rapport with the other reality they appear to describe. The western knowledge of the other/the Indian reality is constructed and incorporated in a discursive system which can be designated as "Orientalist". If this type of discursive system reflects the western fantasy, its determining cultural pressure elevates it to the status of a preponderant hegemonic knowledge to which anyone wanting to describe the other, is bound to refer.

Ideas on which the Indian civilization has been moulded in Europe circulate from one text to another constituting a discursive formation. The preponderance of an individual author is minimised in that textual corpus. Travel narratives we have dealt with belong to his textual network where the individual voice is lost and reduced to silence. It is this textual corpus which creates the mould and gives shape to the reader's comprehension. The narratives of the French travellers in India during the 17th and 18th centuries make a constituting block of that complex collective formation which by dint of diffusing certain images of India ultimately end by confirming and vindicating them and inculcating them in the western mind. By referring to each other, this group of texts established correspondence among themselves. The truth trumpeted by one text echoes through others. Voices are thus intermingled making difficult the task of location the individual one. In our study of narratives of the French travellers in India we find that the images and the truths circulate in one kind of vicious circle. The study of authenticity and the imagination in travel narrative becomes a complex problematic as soon as these texts are integrated into this dense and tightly closed discursive network having the power to set up the truth, to fashion it, to give it a malleable form and simply to nullify it. In that closely circumscribed zone authenticity and imagination dispute over the share of their respective space. The task of demarcating spaces belonging to one and the other is difficult. How can we envisage and establish the division between authenticity and imagination by way of demarcating their respective zones when the described facts in these narratives are strictly regulating by the exigencies of the supreme power of this discursive network?

What happens, as Edward Said, points out, is that we get the textual representation of the country and its people rather than their natural depiction.[9] The line which separates authenticity from imagination is blurred. They overlap. Said emphasises upon the exteriority of the orientalist with respect to her / his objects of study which is the orient. According to that orientalist perspective it can be elucidated, how what is said and written about India remains out of the Indian reality and in the domain of representation without being able to cross its threshold. Diversified strategies of representation render India visible, transparent and place it in the discourse relating to its description. The Indian reality

is perceived through a code of comprehension by these texts which make this discourse function.

Drawing a parallel between the act of translation and the act of travel, Susan Bassnett argues that as far as the question of objectivity, transparency and authenticity are concerned similar questions may be raised. [10] The debate relating to translation which is an object of controversy focuses on the visibility and the absence of visibility of the translator. The debate revolves round the question whether the translator resembles a glass tube through which the text of the sources languages is miraculously transformed into that of the target language or whether he is an element responsible for this process for transformation. Susan Bassnett is of the opinion that the cartographer, the translator or the author of a travel narrative are not innocent producers of texts. The texts that they create are part of the process of manipulation which shapes and conditions the attitudes and the looks with which one perceives another culture. Those texts make an effort, nevertheless, to hide their first objective and pretend to be something different. Cartographers produce texts which can be specifically and intentionally exploited. With each of the words he uses, the translator intervenes in the process of interlingual transfer. In the same way, the author of the travel narrative by situating himself in the source culture describes the target culture. His deeply implanted roots in his own culture prevent him from being objective. He is conditioned by cultural stereotypes when he is confronted with an alien culture and he tries to perceive its reality. The traveller's way of reacting to a foreign culture is influenced by the traits of his own culture. An individual is deeply embedded in his own culture which acts as an environment and develops in him a certain behaviour. The culture acts hegemonically upon the individual. Culture delineates a boundary around a person. What is extrinsic or intrinsic to that culture is decided with respect to that culture. An individual's perception of an alien culture follows the beaten track of prejudices of his own. So the truth presented with so much of pretension and ostentation in travel narratives appears to have been forged and deeply prejudiced.

If the traveller remains handicapped by his culture prejudices, the other reality in its turn presents itself as a disorganised and amorphous ensemble. In spite of the European traveller's effort to discover a

coherent structure, the other remains unstructurable and unfathomable. The tight and constant surveillance of his eyes fails to bring him to any logical and acceptable conclusion. The author's words do not seem to originate from his lived experience. From an orientalist perspective one can say that the description of the Indian reality made by the French traveller in India in 17th and 18th centuries is a repertory of knowledge officially accepted as valid in the west, determined and administered by a restricted and orthodox linguistic and expressive code. The traveller's perception is marked by a grill constituted by this repertory of knowledge and by a code which gives expression to it. Therefore, the objectivity the traveller aspires to ends by becoming a subjective representation of the target culture because the narrator adopts this code to depict the culture he is confronted with.

French travellers' narratives often make use of a rhetorical device which is that of comparison or of analogy. This procedure is a way of linking the world visited/described with that to which the narrator belongs. The comparison facilitates the transition from one world to another. The other is, therefore, described with reference to a knowledge shared by the author and his readers who are located in the same culture. The distances between the self and the other is thus effaced owing to this device adopted. The other becomes transparent by losing its alien aspects and unfamiliarity. It becomes one with the self. Abbe' Perrin, for example, attribute to Hindu divinities a Christian origin to understand the religion of the Indians. The following phrases written by Abbe' Perrin show how he tries to assimilate the other to the self.

> What is important for us to examine here is the Indian trinity which seems to have similarity with that which the Christians adore... Then is there not some rapport between Witchnou and Kristchnou which would mean the Christ? Because the Indians, as we observe them now, do not have any scruple about replacing hard letters by others which are easy to pronounce and whose sounds are pleasant to hear. The most obstinate idolaters in their superstitions have an illogical veneration for the Virgin of the Christians : they prostrate themselves in front of her statue. Being part of the big crowd they run in processions arranged in her worship, they make religious vows to her, they throw flowers at her feet, they present incense to her and dedicate to her a portion of their wealth. [11]

The veracity of the narratives claimed by the authors, is established by the eye witnessing. The author's intervention in the narrative is made through experiences his eyes acquire and confirm for him. The act of seeing with his own eyes gives a persuasive tone to his writing. French travellers in India claim with a concerted insistence that they accord priority to their ocular experiences over hearsay. For them the vision is the primordial instrument of knowledge. The chronology of facts and the order in which the eyes captured them are one and same. There is therefore no distance or difference between the vision and the description, between the seen and the written. But this rapport between the vision and the description gets problematized as soon as one asks if the visibility is given and invariable or if conditions of visibility is likely to be constructed since the field of visibility can be demarcated and determined by the eyes of the subject who sees. The simple rapport between the vision and the description can get complicated since it is quite possible that what is reported is what the eyes want to see. It can also happen that what one sees is what one wants to write about. The author does not indiscriminately describe the events. He makes a conscious choice of events to be described. Their mode of presentation is also subject to a private choice. The author's intervention is thus preponderant in the linguistic and rhetorical choice. The following extract from the narrative of Gregoire do Challes, a contemporary of Francois Martin, shows the problematized relationship between what is seen and what is told.

> If the woman dies first the gentleman Bramene looks elsewhere for a companion and in the hands of a new bride consoles himself of the death of his first beloved. It is not so for her; she, not wanting to lose her reputation is forced to burn herself in the same fire which consumes the corpse. I have not seen this, but having the confirmation of this fact from many reliable French people (Francais dignes do foi) who saw this, I have no difficulty to take it as true. This is how it is practised... They told me that four month ago we arrived in a village where we came to know about the death of a Bramene who was to be cremated on that day and whose wife was to set herself on fire with him. We wanted to see the ceremony... [12]

Here the narrator borrows the words of his "reliable" fellow-country men. The veracity of their words can by no chance be put to question. They

do not run the risk of being accused of falsification. The reality reported here is perceived through a system encoding that reality which the author borrows. He is imprisoned and conditioned by a network of words whose surveillance his own words are subject to. So that the author's own words are taken as true, he has to just use one appositive expression (dignes de foi) which does not necessarily succeed in convincing the reader of the tangibility of the reported fact. Here there is no simple and unequivocal rapport between the vision and the description. This example also shows how the author appropriates the speech which is not his own. By capturing the words of his interlocutors on the sport, he transmits them live to the readers. So the first person we (nouns) gets supplanted by they (ils). Then the authors make them give an account of the ceremony during which the widow immolates herself in the fire in a way so that their speech and his own merge into one.

Todorov argues that the interpretation of the other carried out by Christopher Colombus is hued by his preconception. Colombus does not want to rely on his empirical evidences to discover the other. He is sure to encounter the cyclopes men with trails just because he has a prior knowledge about their existence. Instead of saying that the sirens do not exist he confirms that they are not as beautiful as others believe them to be. Todorov notices that since there is nothing empirical in Colombus's discovery his arguments are arguments of authority and not that of experience. He has a prior idea of what he is going to discover. His concrete experiences only illustrate a truth of which he is already the depository. Todorov thinks therefore that Christopher Colombus does not discover America. He finds it there where he expects it to be located. The other, internalised in western imagination, has always been regarded as a menacing and destablising experiences for the Europeans. It was more a matter of conquering it than knowing it. Therefore, Europe's endeavour of assimilating the other amounted to the elimination of its otherness. Europeans succeeded in their project because they spread their values in the entire world. Colonised people adopted them through culinary habits, through dress codes and through other cultural influences brought about by the Europeans. These influences shaped their habits and their psychology.

A reading of the narratives of French travellers during the 17th and 18th centuries brings us to the subject of French perception of India.

I believe that rather than the French perception, a supranational European perception of India emerges out of these texts. The identity of the author is assimilable to that of an European. India and Indians are located with respect to Europe and Europeans. The French perception on the one hand and the European perception on the other often overlap and constitute at the end a single image. The epoch when these texts are written is marked by harsh and fierce rivalry between European countries who fight for the military and commercial supremacy on the Indian subcontinent. So the attitude vis-à-vis India is more or less shared by the colonising European powers. Paul Hazard refers to this common European identity. [14] Citing Voltaire, Paul Hazard says that Europe can be singled out from the rest of the world by the fact that it has a common religion and identical principles of public and political laws. He adds that war and turmoil confronting Europeans do not prevent them from remaining together. Paul Hazard, in the same way as Voltaire, envisages Europe as a vast republic, consisting of many states which are aristocratic, republicans, popular or monarchial. According to him this epoch owes its glory and celebrity to the people of Europe and not to a single European country.

In course of my study of French travel narratives, I have tried to situate these texts in a particular historical context which is that of European expansionism which had set the discovery of the other and subsequently its conquest, as its objective. Textual productions are parts of events taking place in, the historical and social world. This historical and social dimension of the travel narratives seem to have a primordial importance. Edward Said argues that pure textually is the antithesis of history. [15] A study which deals too much with pure textuality does not always take into account what is pertaining to the world and what is socially influenced and contaminated. Texts are very strongly attached to circumstances of their production. They owe their genesis to the world and to events. Even when they appear to deny it, texts are parts of social milieu, of human life and of the historical moments where they are located. It is important to note how the information diffused by the travel narratives constitutes a repertory of a well organised array of knowledge often expressed in non-aggressive scientific vocabulary. With these innocently detailed information and systematically crafted methods of cartography, travellers with scientific and geographical

missions provided their respective countries with surer means of ensuring success in their expansionist drive. Because being better informed about countries and their people, about maritime, riverine and terrestrial routes, about plants and mineral resources, Europeans could better conceive of ways to settle themselves and to dominate in the countries where travels were taking place.

This European hegemony brought the idea of aristocracy among the human species which became divided and hierarchical. This hierarchical structure of humanity opposed the white people to others who became subject to the nobility of the human race and who, as a result, could be trained and mastered. The ideas of the French travellers relating to Indians insist in a deterministic way the concept of fundamental segregation of the human species. This idea of a fundamental cleavage was at the centre of a debate intellectually very fertile in the Europe of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which discussed about the possibility of having a hybrid human race. The debate which centered around the question of whether human beings belonged to the same species or not, whether they were alike or different, provoked inexhaustible polemics. Subjects like hybridity, interracial fertility and racial theory of polygenesis were intensely discussed. The theory of polygenesis was opposed to the biblical relations which affirm that humanity descends from a common origin. In France Gobineau expressed the ideas that the races merged into one another and that this intermingling constituted news ones having completely new physical and mental traits which often showed signs of determination and degeneration in comparison with the original races. These new races according to these theories threatened to corrupt and to weaken the vigours and virtues of the original ones. In the narratives of French travellers in India we note this fundamental cleavage among men who are historically and ontologically separated.

Gauri Viswanathan in her study of institution, practice and ideology of English studies in India during the English colonial rule, argues that whereas the Englishmen were judged capable of understanding and appreciating exotic, romantic stories, adventure tales or mythological literature and of benefiting from their study, their colonical subjects in India were regarded incapable of doing so.[16] Because the English educators thought that the moral and aesthetic culture necessary for literary appreciation was missing in Indians, therefore they were not in

a position to draw instructive value from such studies. *Shakuntala* which enthralled and delighted the Europeans by its beauty and lyrical charms was not approved and included in the syllabus of Indian educational institutions because of its impurity and immorality as an oriental text. The incapability to make the distinction between decency and indecency was considered one of the innate characteristics of colonial subjects. What is at stake is not the morality in literature but the intellectual faculty of the Indians. So, elevating Indians to the same intellectual level as the Westerners through an educational project based on an European model was the first step towards imparting literary knowledge to Indians. This European education was conceived in order to prevent the Indians, whose character lacked moral strength, from being seduced by the impurities of traditional Indian literature.

In French travel narratives the valorisation of European culture is always noticed. This idea would be developed up to the 20th century by western scholars who claim that the dynamism of Indian society was set in motion by European orientalist projects. The road towards modernisation of Indian society was made open by the transformation which the works undertaken by these orientalist brought in Indians. [17] They put particularly the regional elite Indians in rapport with the dynamics of the contemporary western society at the end of the eighteenth century. Thus a new Indian intelligentsia that was stimulated by a new historical consciousness and was imbibed with a new national identity was born. The birth of Indian nationalism was facilitated by the opportunity the Indians had of educating themselves with liberal doctrines of the European thought. Western scholars argue that this training in European liberal doctrines succeeded in including a new identity in Indians and in reinforcing their national and historical consciousness. So, Indians, who were in a state of intellectual numbness and moral degeneration caused by superstitions and effects of despotic rules, through contact with the European people, benefited from the ideas of political liberty, of intellectual enlightenment and of historical identity. In the narratives of French travellers we find constant references to the moral decrepitude, to the intellectual disability of the Indians as if to justify the European intervention to rectify the wrongs committed by the Indians. These narratives therefore, give an image of the Indians who are situated at the opposite end of the Europeans marked by their

rational and critical spirit, characterised by their moral strength and invulnerability.

While analysing the narratives of French travellers in India, we talked about the grill through which authors envisage the other. This grill restricts the empirical limit of these narratives. Possession is pre-eminently the form by which the other is incorporated in these narratives. The ethnocentrism which leaves its profound mark in these travel narratives, constructs an adapted representation of the other. The image of the other reflected in these narratives shows how the knowledge is constructed according to a discursive field which creates the representation of the object of that knowledge, its constitution and its boundaries. The author has to conform to this representation in order to communicate, to be understood, to be "authentic" and therefore be accepted. It is a complex series of constructed representations which effectively constitute India and determine the way in which it would be understood.

Robert Young argues that the world since the Renaissance is inconceivable without the efforts produced by the westernisation which asserted itself and spread in course of the last few centuries.[18] Now we live in a time witnessing the opening up of the frontiers and effects of globalisation where we are inching towards a monoculture. With globalisation taking place with giant's leaps, differences are getting erased. The multi-coloured mosaic of culture is getting covered with a rigid plate of a monotonous and uniform tint hiding the shimmering variety. We are going to live in a homogenized world where there will be no mystery of the "other". The big world community of which contours have already started appearing will be organised according to principles prescribed and laid down by the post-industrial, transnational powers. Chris Bongie refers to this world without horizons where nothing new will strike the eyes.[19] The gradual disappearance of alternative spaces is the result of the spread of globalisation which has reached the furthest corners of the world. Intensive industrialisation and urbanisation which started in Europe in the last decade of the nineteenth century had world wide repercussion. This process of globalisation puts the cultural diversity at stake. In the twentieth century ethnography in Levi-Strauss, for examples one frequently comes across the idea that alternative societies are disappearing as a result of this homogeneity. The effect of monoculture is acting upon humanity. This process of

the other getting reduced to the same gave birth to the project of exoticism in literary and existential practice. Exoticism envisages another space outside the boundary of the western civilization which because of its modernity is incompatible with certain lost values. In an author like Pierre Loti we find an exoticism which is presented in the form of a search for irretrievable and therefore unobtainable values in the western society but which can be recuperated in an alternative geographic space.

But the crisis of exoticism emerged from the fact that the other is absorbed in the same and that the possibility of a radically different elsewhere is reduced and inconceivable. As Western expansion takes place on a global scale, the modernity which is its outcome inevitably puts into question the autonomy of the other. Texts such as French travel narratives on India situate the other in a peripheral position. The physical, psychological, geographical and culture distance which severes the French traveller from the Indian, his object of knowledge and description renders the representation of the other deformed and fantasized.

While looking into the rapport between the travel and French literature it can be noticed how the works of Montesquieu or Voltaire bear a deep imprint of travel narratives and open the perspective of relativist and cosmopolitan spirit. It should be noted here that their predecessor Montaigne expressed this relativist attitudes towards other people many a times in his essays. Voltaire was influenced by England, profoundly impressed by the old Chinese civilization and had a great attachment for pagan greco-roman culture. He was thus favourable to the idea of human diversity. These works combined ethnocentrism regarded as outfashioned and the advent of the cherished idea of human and cultural diversity. With the multiplication of a number of voyages the idea of monolithic humanity gets supplanted by that of cultural and historical relativity. In his *Essai sur les moeurs* Voltaire says that everything pertaining to human nature is same from one corner to another of this world and that everything relating to customs is different. Finding similarities in the domain of customers is a luck one should not count much on. Nature produces the unity and establishes a restricted number of invariable principles. On the foundation laid down by a common nature, culture produces diversity.

It should be noticed that the idea of unity and diversity is one of the key concepts of the Enlightenment philosophy. The belief that man, despite his cultural difference, is basically same, prompts Voltaire to write a history of civilisations of the world. The extreme diversity among man and in the beliefs, values, customs and institutions in item and space, is without importance when it comes to defining human nature. If dissected, successive organic psychological, social and cultural layers will be found in man. These layers were left in many by different evolutionary steps he had passed through. According to this concept, man is a stratified animal. The century of the Enlightenment and the classical anthropology adopt the same approach to define man. Thus an archetypal image of a man with respect to the ordinary individual man is constructed. The philosophy of the Enlightenment is in search of this fundamental archetypal man who is hidden behind layers which gets accumulated in course of evolution. Individuality is envisaged as an accidental deviation in contrast to the image of an immutable and legitimate man. The human essence at the end is defined in normative and prescriptive ways. If there is any diversity, it is external because after all, man has a fixed nature whatever be the space and the environment in which he is situated. This human nature is structured according to the image of western man. The century of Enlightenment looks for the shadow of this unique and natural man among people belongs to the furthest corners of the world.

In the description of an alien culture it is prudent to apply the semiotic concept of culture according to arguments put forward by the American ethnographer Clifford Geertz. Geertz takes culture to be a web of signification which man weaves around him and in which he finds himself suspended.[20] The analysis and description of that culture should not consist of laws or rules governing that culture. Instead it is better to take recourse to the methods of experimental science. He who studies another culture should make interpretative analysis and should look for meaning and not for laws. The traveller finds himself amidst multiple complex structures of the society he visits. Structures which overlap and which are jumbled up in a confused state appear to him as strange, irregular and inexplicit. He tries to understand them and then to describe them. It is an effort to which, Geertz feels, the semiotic concept of a culture is well adapted. The culture as a system

of impenetrable signs is not to be envisaged as a dominating superstructure to be wretched and supervised to which events, institutions and behaviour can easily be attributed. It should be perceived as a context in which and with respect to which men and their behaviour can be read and interpreted. A culture is like a sign to be decoded. The discovery of a culture and its people should consist in exposing its normality and not in underpinning what appears abnormal about that culture to the observer. It is by putting in its context of banality that one can make that culture accessible, that one can eliminate its opacity. This is how one can avoid making certain faux-pas, that is to say, displaying that alien exotic culture in the folk museum, making an inventory of its traits, classifying and dividing its constituting structures and dissecting it to discover it in its entirety. If one does interpret that culture in its banal context then there is no conclusion to be drawn and only dialogue to engage and sustain.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES


1. Francois Hartog, *Miroir d'Herodote: Essai Sur la representation de l'Autre* (Paris: Editions Gallimardm 1980).
2. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages*, Tome 2 (Paris: Chez Gervais Clozier et. Claude Barbin 1677) p. 366.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 373.
4. Ibid.
5. Guy Deleury ed., *Les Indes Florissantes Anthologic des Voyageurs Francais (1750-1820)* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont S.A. 1991), p. 475.
6. Jean-Baptiste Chevalier, *Les Aventures de Jean-Baptiste Chevalier dans-a Inde Orientale (1752-1765)*, Vol. CXL, texts etablis par Jean Deloche (Paris: Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient 1984), pp. 29-30.
7. *Ibid.*, 112.
8. *Ibid.*, 126.
9. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books 1978).
10. Susan Bassnett, "Constructing Cultures: The Politics of Travellers' Tales", *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Black 1993).
11. Guy Deleury ed., *Les Indes Florissantes Anthologis des voyageurs francais (1750-1820)* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffort S. A. 1991), pp. 609-11.
12. Gregoire de Challes, *Journal d'un voyage fait ans Indes Orientales*, Tome 2 (Rouen: Chez Jean.-Baptiste Machuel le Jeune 1721), pp. 181-83.

13. Tzvetan Todorov, *La Conquete de l'Amerique: La Question de l'autre* (Paris: Le Seuil 1982).
14. Paul Hazard, *La Pensée Européenne an Dix-huitième Siècle: De Montesquien à Lessing, Tome 2* (Paris: Ancienne Librairie Furne 1946).
15. Edward, W. Said, *The World, the Text and the Critic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1983).
16. Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (Delhi: OUP 1998).
17. David Cop., *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance: The Dynamics of Indian Modernization (1773-1835)* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay 1969).
18. Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge 1990).
19. Chris Bongie, *Exotic Memories: Literature, Colonialism and the Fin de Siècle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1991).
20. Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (London: Hutchinson. 1975).

*Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta*

# WRITING THE ORAL: ISSUES IN TRANSLATION

The many dimensions of translation studies today extend to various modes of textual representations of which the transference from an oral to a written context can be a valid area of attention. An oral text is never simply transmitted into the written form as the oral and the written belong to two different circuits of communication. Deviating strategies of writing become necessary for the re-presentation of the oral within the written. We will try to see what these deviations are, their effect on the entire circuit of communication or more precisely their role in bringing about changes in the location of the writer and the reader with reference to narrative events in the oral community.

There are scholars like Lord and Parry who would say that it is impossible to transcribe the oral into the written, "The two techniques (oral and written) are contradictory and mutually exclusive. Once the oral technique is lost, it is never regained. The written technique is not compatible with oral technique". [1] There are others like Ruth Finnegan who will negate the idea of the binary opposition between the oral and the written that is inherent in their views. Finnegan's argument against the statement is that poets do compose in traditional oral modes even as they operate within the written or printed medium and also that Lord who was writing about Yugoslav heroic singers had no evidence that the oral technique could never be regained once it was lost. [2] The argument of scholars subscribing to Lord's and Parry's views would, to a large extent, be based on the fact that written texts lose out on all the performance elements of oral texts which include the style of delivery or variations in tone and tempo, gestures and body language signifying attitudes and tensions and quite importantly the interaction with the audience. Yet oral texts continue to be transferred into the written with varying strategies and with varying degrees of success.

Before looking into the various strategies, it is important to formulate some of the most pertinent issues involved in such transference,

one of which is that of cultural difference. The difference may be partial, for instance, in the case of a written form belonging to the same language as the oral and existing simultaneously. However, even in such a case the readers addressed by the written text are seldom the participants of the oral narrative events. The two groups belong to two different circuits with different material conditions of life, different expectations and maybe even somewhat different world-views. The gap seems almost unbridgeable and the central question relates to whose text the written version is—the oral narrator's or the writer's? The question is one that may be asked of any piece of translated work and it takes us to the age-old issue of fidelity in translation, an outmoded issue according to some. Yet there are perhaps just a few voices which will not reiterate that no great translation worth its name ever showed disregard for fidelity involving respect for the source. The issue in the case of the oral and the written is perhaps somewhat different, as what is involved is a particular social situation where the interaction between two cultures occurs within asymmetrical power relations. This may or may not be the case in the context of translation from one written language to another, but the asymmetry is greater and more obvious in the case of script and non-script societies within which the transference usually occurs.

In the above context, translation can draw several lessons from ethnography that has come to be seen no longer as a mere description of other cultures, but as a "translation" into a familiar form through the mediation of a more self-reflexive, often participant translator. The authority of the ethnographer as narrator and interpreter has been questioned and altered. In the words of James Clifford the whole question is this, "how precisely, is a garrulous, over-determined cross-cultural encounter shot through with power relations and personal cross-purposes circumscribed as an adequate version of a more or less discrete 'other world' composed by an individual author?" [3] And so, he further states, the ethnographer today seeks to represent her research experience in ways that "tear open the textualised fabric of the other, and thus of the interpreting self". Oral narratives do contain worlds within themselves, and it becomes imperative to ask how an adequate translation may be made without erasing or glossing over elements that are at the core of such narratives. The translator's task is not simply that of substituting

one word for another, but as Edmund Leach observed, that of "finding categories in his own ways of thought which can be fitted to the complex of observed facts which he records."[4] The word has to be invested with all the nuances it has in the context and here the ethnographer has various methods at her disposition.

In ethnography, the interlinear method of translation has been much in vogue, and it has also been used in the case of transfer of oral communication. The process purports to show the in-between stages of transfer from one language system to another. But the final version in any case, reverts back to the translator and her prerogative to 'interpret' in order to bring forward the entire context. There is usually an accompanying gloss and how the gloss is presented matters. The consciousness of the limitations of one's culture with reference to another's, the knowledge that 'pure' translation is impossible and that there can only be an approximation of the sum-total of all that a sign implies, helps at least in setting out a premise while approaching another culture.

Scholars have also questioned the validity of the equation between translation of culture and translation of language. A possible answer to this, of course, is that translation of language is not merely a matter of matching sentences in the abstract, nor is the linguistic translator working only with "a specific set of discourse" as opposed to the cultural translator, the anthropologist, for instance, who constructs "the discourse as a cultural text in terms of meanings implicit in a range of practices" [5] as stated by Talal Asad. There is some justification to the approach, but again the whole concept of the text as having a fixed identity and hence as being "a specific piece of discourse" needs to be and has been questioned. This is perhaps more so in the case of oral traditions where what is transmitted is not a text in the same sense as in the written tradition. To quote Ruth Finnegan on the subject, in such transmissions there is "the *potential* for formulating texts. That is, there way be the transmission of specific linguistic and musical skills and styles (either written or oral), or a tradition of trained experts, of themes and stories, or of conventional occasions for literary or artistic display. But all these are different from the transmission of texts as such" [6]

Finnegan goes on to suggest that it is important in speaking of oral transmissions to locate which of the specific kinds of transmission is

involved. Here again perhaps, there is room for difference, for there are transmissions that would seek to include most of the elements mentioned above. The collection of Mymensingh ballads by Dineshchandra Sen may be cited as an example. Sen wanted to preserve in a written form the rich tradition of performed tales in Mymensingh. His introduction to the source was through a literate member, Chandrakumar De, of the same village community where the songs were sung and it was he who compiled the songs. The fluidity of the notion of text became evident in the different versions that later appeared as well as in the controversy relating to the arrangement of the story which many felt was the handiwork of the transcriber and compiler. As far as the transcription itself was concerned, literal representation along with comments within parenthesis as in stage directions sought to convey impressions of the original experience. Moreover, the language remained as in the oral narrative keeping alive most of the nuances that would have been erased with the standardization of the language. However, what also surfaced was a sense of loss in relation to the elements of performance. It may also be mentioned in this context that the English translation of the narratives by Dineshchandra Sen reads as a paraphrase of the original and conveys very little of the experience of the Bengali version.

We will begin our study of translation of oral forms into the written by looking at *vratakathā*—stories accompanying joyous rituals mostly undertaken by women for the fulfillment of some desire linked with the welfare of community and family. Since *katha* or stories are part of a larger composite form we would once again be looking at a part in the written form and not the whole. Some critics are of the opinion that *katha* is not a part of the *vrata*, but has a separate entity altogether. The opinion is debatable as the *katha* provides a fitting end to a ritual, holding up its essence in the form of a story, reinforcing the significance of the ritual through an event in the past and thereby providing a link between the two time spans. The *vrata* originally linked with an agricultural society does not have the same dimensions today nor does the *katha* that is found in great abandon in pavement stalls as booklets with a uniform style and a bare formulaic structure. In some of the early collections, however, one finds an attempt at a closer translation. Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumdar's *Ṭhāndidir Thaley*,[8] a collection of

*vratkathā*, may be cited as a case in point. The texts often begin with a grandmother's voice telling a group of young girls how to observe a particular *vrata* and then narrating a story. She usually begins by addressing the girls, "*Lakshmira*!" (All of you, good girls!) and continues. The language preserves the rhythm of speech, there are pauses after each two or three words and a structure of repetition :

> "Ek bachar Jāi, ārek bachar pare vaiśākh māse, bacharer pratham, maser pratham, sei pratham dine, -haricaran vrata nite hai. Nite hai; -pratyek din, ghoom theke uṭhe, kāpad copaḍ cheḍe, kichu nā kheye, śuddha śānta haye ei vrata karte hai. Hai-jatadin nā vaiśākh mās śeṣ habe, tatadin vrata karbe. Karbe, tārparer dinke din śeṣdin.../'
>
> (One year passes, another year comes, in *Baisakh*, the beginning of the year, the beginning of the month, on that first day— the *vrata* of Haricharan has to be taken. Has to be taken; -every day, after awakening, after changing, without taking any food, in a very pure manner this *vrata* has to be performed. Has to be performed, -you will perform the *vrata* as long as the month does not end. As you perform, the day after that, the last day...")

Changes in the syntactic order, modes of address, sentences in the imperative mood, a certain manner of reckoning the flow of time and the passing of days preserve elements of speech within the written form. The speech also belongs to a certain genre— that of the gradmother's tale, where she weaves one word after another, often standing back to listen as it were, generating and giving form to a whole way of life. In fact, the preface does suggest that the story read out in a proper manner to a child will compensate for the absence of a grandparent's story telling session. The typography is also suggestive with its verse-like arrangement and with certain words in bold representing as it were the modulations of a voice and stress in intonation. Then there are colloquial words and expressions along with rare instances of *śuddha* or refined Bangla. The injunctions are often interspersed with questions and in answer the instructions continue in a make-believe pattern of interaction. All through the first section the focus is on performance and then gradually, out of this performance, one is at the end led to the *katha*. The *katha* follows the same style of narration :

"Ek je soudagar, ār tār mā. Soudāgarer mā ṣoudāgarke biye kariye ghare bou ānila, sei bou je soudāgar vrata karita. Karita; saudāgarer dhan-jan dāy-daulat tate upce uṭhte lāgila. Lāgila... [10] (There was once a merchant and his mother. The merchant's mother got him married and brought his wife home; that wife, she would perform the *yampukur vrata*. Would perform; and so the merchant's wealth and property began to grow and to spill over. To spill over...)

The narrative including rhymes and patterns of verbal repetitions often in a question-answer form has the effect of a musical or a dance sequence and the *katha* receives its meaning as well as its vitality in being placed within the context of performance, even within the printed form. The more authentic the *kathā*, the more instances do we find of oral elements within the text. In the *Vrata-Darpaṇ* (1926) published by Kamalini Sahitya Mandir, the same *vrata* is narrated in its bare outlines, without any typographical markers of orality, in a colloquial style with repetitions of sequences:

"e dike sukrajer bou, kārtik mās paḍtei uṭhane pukur khuṅḍe yampukur pujo karche, eman samay tar sasudi ese balley— 'hyāṅ lo bou, o ki pujo kacchis? Kī hiḍbiḍocchis? Kī hiḍbiḍocchis? Āmār cheleke khābi nā āmār meyeke khābi? [11] (Meanwhile Sukraj's wife dug a pond in the courtyard as soon as it was the month of *kārtik* to perform *yampukur pūjā* when her mother-in-law came and said, "Oh wife! What puja are you performing? What are you mumbling? What are you jumbling? Will you eat up my son or will you eat up my daughter?')

The orthography on occasion deviates from the standard emphasizing the ancient or the rural. There are older *kathā* where little or no attempt has been made to 'translate' the stories into written forms or rather where a host of oral genres are imprinted into the written form bringing in a densely layered structure. The *kathā* that we were looking at are not finally instances of the written. They occupy a middle space between the oral and the written as the intention behind the written is its re-narration as the oral. Issues in this case are more or less formal and the ideological changes in registers are not as complex as in the case of an authentic written form, the short story or the novel, for instance.

A quite different mode of representation of oral narratives occurs within the parameters of the written. A novel or a short story sometimes represents a rural community with its rich repertoire of narratives orally transmitted and to bring them within its purview takes recourse to different strategies. The storyteller in most of these cases is an archetypal figure—an old lady, quite alone in the world, who sits and weaves her stories blending local myth and history. The use of dialect, of a free indirect mode of narration, of figurative speech and an abundance of action words serve to translate the oral into the form of the written. The 'success' of the translation depends also to a large extent on contextualization—firstly, to the setting of the oral narrative within a non-script community and secondly, to the juxtaposition of the narrative event in the novel with the narrated performance event in the community. This particular mode of representation also suggests an ethnographic account remodeled to bring in a sense of completion and a certain trajectory through history, for what we are talking about also goes under the name of 'regional novel', the 'regional' quality deriving from the depiction of a non-mainstream, rural, often tribal community. In the Indian context, some of the most memorable novels have been written under the rubric of the 'regional' and that in spite of the authorial, omnipresent narrator. This is because the narrator has a very intimate knowledge of the 'region' as well as a deep bond of affinity with the people he represents. Such representations have a validity of their own. From another perspective though, the non-script community, in most cases, remains the 'other' embedded forever in a fast vanishing past. Translation in this case again is perhaps minimally so as the oral narrative remains within a constructed system of similarity in a larger context. The author-translator has taken the narrative, constructed a similar system and then placed the narrative within it—the dialectic of change that is generated in the transfer of a text from one culture to another is only minimally present.

It is again from within the domain of anthropology that another pertinent question had been raised. The field worker learns to live the form of life of another culture, to speak another kind of language and then translates it for Western man who makes use of it as he pleases but has no intentions to live by it as well. [12] We have here a very direct and down to earth attitude that seeks to question the ends of translation

as activity and there is also the assumption that a passive reception of the translated text amounts to an undermining of the very act of translation. What is called for is a process of dialectic between the two fortified with the knowledge that all cultures/languages are equal and fully formed at any given moment of time. Moving from cultural translation to the domain of linguistic translation we realize again that the issue mentioned above is crucial to the study of any cross-cultural phenomenon. We also realize that the issue has been addressed before. The most pertinent example before us is that of Zora Neale Hurston and a reading of her texts by Henry Louis Gates Jr. from the point of view of the 'speakerly'. Gates points out that there is a whole school of Black American writers trying to represent the oral tradition in different ways. But, Gates suggests Hurston's representation of orality is a big leap forward for her texts are 'speakerly' where the rhetorical strategy is primarily "designed to represent an oral literary history".[13] It goes beyond the limits of the colloquial, drawing upon a wide range of semiotic systems to produce meaning. There is also a self-reflexive attitude towards orality and its relation to written language.

Drawing upon the insight of Gates, I would like to focus nearer home on an activist author-narrator Mahasweta Devi, who has lived for many years with the people she portrays in her stories, participating in their lives and activities, living as they do. Her life with them, she says, has taught her something very essential— the art of survival among all kinds of adverse circumstances— and revealed to her the sources of an irrepressible, unending vitality. She, in her turn, has devoted herself to bring justice to their lives, engaged in a grim battle with different power structures that submit them to an inhuman exploitation and has been trying to restore to them their rights of living freely as human beings of a civilized society. It is this interaction that legitimizes her representation of minority groups and tribal communities. Mahasweta Devi's fiction often presents oral narratives along with other speech elements from the primarily oral communities that she represents. The contextualisation appears to be similar to the ones encountered in earlier narrative texts in so far as the large narrative event takes place within the same oral community. The oral tales are not necessarily foregrounded— they are generally myths dating from an ancient time and stylistically their narration is similar to that of other events in the narrative. Where

Mahasweta Devi is different is in the area of contextualisation for it is not just the setting, the people and the use of a hybrid language that serve to integrate the oral narrative within the written, but often a second similar story from contemporary history. In the story "Sisu" [15] for instance the mythical story of the Agaria prince and his bravery as he fights the sun god is juxtaposed with the bravery of contemporary young men who fight the entire system when the abode of their gods is desecrated. Similarly, in "Behula", [16] the local version of the story of Behula gets merged with contemporary narrative events related to snakebites, resultant deaths and attempts to find remedies. The mythical stories are compressed into a couple of sentences, where the oral tradition asserts itself in the rapid and picture-like sequence of events and short sentences without any subordinating clauses. These stories are however placed within a densely layered structure of languages. In "Sisu", for instance, the mythical story from the past is interrupted several times with contemporary voices each having its characteristic diction. In "Behula", the local language provides a framework to the story as it were, while phrases from textbooks, official jargon related to various bureaucratic institutions and the standard language of the research worker intermingle. Multiple perspectives associated with the multiple registers of language, each filtered through the other, invest the different elements of the story with a vibrant, dynamic quality. The oral narratives are not isolated, exoticised units, nor do they provide a site for various stereotyped signifieds. The reader realises that Mashasweta Devi, in trying to translate the oral story into the present is also trying to grapple with the situation of the marginal or the adivasi in contemporary history and at the same time the quest of the middle-class urban protagonist in the writerly tradition for identity as he begins to be conscious of the presence of the marginal or the tribal as part of his own history. Both stories engage with the theme of crossing over which as the stories show is never an easy task even as the writing of the oral is not. The stories also suggest that there has to be a constant process of interaction and dialectic at all levels and a willingness to go to the last point whatever that may bring. In "Behula", Sripada has to die to make the protagonist take up full responsibility and act, be partly integrated with the community, which he realises is not simply inert matter for research. In "Sisu", the protagonist encounters confrontation on all sides as he

fully enters the world of the tribal, which leads to an epistemological crisis. On the literary level, the crisis is expressed in terms of the petrifaction of speech, a threshold to insanity. The understanding of speech in the entire story is important for it is the self-reflexive use of speech—the protagonist's involvement in the affairs of the land is mapped out in terms of his ability to use the mixed language—along with juxtaposition of stories from the past and the present, that link the text with the oral tradition, transferring the moment of oral narrative to the present in its own right, with a minimum of erasure and with a new meaning in history.

The process of translation from the oral into the written is then necessarily a process of interaction that brings about changes in the entire circuit of communication, with the narrator and the reader moving out of their spheres along with the protagonist with whom the reader identifies, in order to come to terms with the reality of the oral community vis-a-vis his own existence as part of a written community and all that it implies. The oral community in turn is represented in terms of the present and in the context of a larger reality that encompasses the global order. An inadequate consideration of this basic premise is bound to lead to gross erasures and to "mummified" texts in translation.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES


1. Lord, Albert, *The Singer of Tales*, New York: Atheneum, 1960, p. 169.
2. Finnegan, Ruth, *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication.* Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1983.
3. Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture, Twentieth Century Literature, Ethnography and Art*, Cambridge, Mass and London: Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 22
4. Leach, Edmund, *Social Anthropology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 53.
5. Asad, Talal, "The Concept of Cultural Translation" in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Polities of Ethnography*, Ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus, California: University of California Press, 1986, p. 160.
6. Finnegan, Ruth, *op.cit*, p. 171.
7. Sen, Dineshchandra, *Maimansimha Gitika* [Bengali] Calcutta: Calcutta University, p. 1923.

8. Mitra Majumdar, Dakshinaranjan, "Ṭhāndidir Thale" in *Dakṣiṇāranjan Racanāsamagraha* [Bengali] (Vol.1), Calcutta: Mitra and Ghosh, 1979, p. 377.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 397.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Chattopadhyay, Sudevchandra, *Vrata Darpan* [Bengali] Calcutta: Kamalini Sahitya Mandir, 1926.
12. See Asad, Talal, *op.Cit.*, p. 149.
13. Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. *"Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Hurston and the Speakerly Text" *Zora Neale Hurston: Critical Perspectives Past and Present*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and K.A. Appiah, New York: Anivastad 1993, p. 165.
14. See Choubey, Kripasankar, *Mahāraṇyer Mā* [Bengali] Calcutta: Prama Prakasani, 1979, p. 21
15. Devi, Mahasweta. "Sisu", *Naiṛte Megh*, Calcutta: Karuna Prakasani, 1979, pp. 59-71.
16. Devi, Mahasweta, "Behula", *Mahasweta Devir Chotogalpo Saṅkalan*, 1993, pp. 94-117.

## FROM THE HILL TO THE FIELD

Rameshwar Bhattacharya's poem known as *Śiva Saṁkīrtana* on *Śivāyana,* composed around 1710-11 is one of the first works, if not the first, narrating certain episodes in the life and activities of Siva and his consort Gauri or Parvati. This poem shares some of the features of the genre which has been named as the Maṅgal Kāvyas by the Bengali literary historians. The Mangal Kavyas are a class of writings which celebrate the glory and power of gods, such as Chandi and Manasa and Dharma and attempt to establish their links with the Puranic pantheon. In this respect they can be regarded with some justification as indigenous puranas seeking to legitimize the existence of various gods and goddesses, which are in all probability of non-puranic origin. It will be preposterous to question the Puranic status of gods and goddesses like Siva or even Chandi; their links with the great Hindu-rahmanical traditions one too obvious to be ignored— but what is important is to recognize the fact that various little traditions contributed enormously in their formation. In certain cases they originally belonged to regional traditions, worshipped by specific groups of people, quite often by specific groups of working class, or by women, and then slowly were accepted by the larger community, including the Brahmins who provided the links between them and the scriptures. Temples were erected for their glorification, images were made replacing the humble symbols of pots or branches of trees, Sanskrit was used to perform their worship, and in certain cases Brahmin priests took over the charges from non-Brahmin worshippers. Chandi or Manasa are such divinities.

But there was another process where the deity, already an established Puranic god, was partly indigenized and partly given a new form or a new dimension by incorporating new materials current in different regions. Siva, for example, was already a prestigious god, an important member of the trinity, celebrated in the Puranas, and the presiding deity of millions of people all over the country, before Rameshwar wrote his

*Śivāyana* It is true that even before his exaulted establishment as the prime deity in the Hindu pantheon, he indulges in drugs and roams about with his obedient bull and with a trident in his hand. Along with his benign as well as terrifying aspects, Kalidasa also created a charming and romantic Siva ever blessed with connubial bliss. He celebrated a relationship as profound and inseparable as the word and the meaning, as did the Indian sculpture in the image of *arddha-nārīśvara.* This was the Siva known all over India, the great ascetic, the great god of destruction and yet benign and gentle. In course of time, it is different to ascertain when, he was got associated with the goddess of destruction, the terrifying Kali, an instance of the happy marriage between Siva thought and Tantrik ideals. Although these are the images that have dominated the devotees in different parts of the country, and various legends have grown around them, there were several other legends, and traditions surrounding Siva — or I may suggest cautiously, some other god who later got identified with Siva— current among the lower strata of the society. These legends did not find room in the puranic structures or in the texts glorifying the emerging gods and goddesses.

It appears that either there were several stories about Siva highlighting his infatuation for women of low caste, or/and of his association with the agricultural activities, in the oral tradition. They were censored by the Brahmanical ideology and were never allowed to be incorporated in the written literature. Siva's role as a cultivator or a fisherman or as of peddler of bracelets made of conch is neither attested by any sacred text nor was welcomed by the higher caste Hindus as they considered such representations vulgar and undignified. Rameshwar's text is important in the history of the Siva legend as it attempted courageously to graft such ; legends into the body of his poem along with other traditional materials.

II

Rameshwar's *Śivāyana* is divided into thirteen parts beginning with prayers to various gods and goddesses, temples and holy places, followed by a cosmology and mythological episodes such as the sacrifice of Daksha, the childhood of Gauri and her marriage with Siva. In this respect the poet follows the puranas as well as the structure of the Maṅgal Kāvyas. The poem also includes the episodes of the abduction

of Rukmini and also of Usha, the origins of the *Sivaratri* Vrata and the importance of the *Ekadasi*. The first part of the poem consists of all these materials. The structure of the narrative is very loose and some of the episodes do not have any organic unity with the whole. The abduction stories of Rukmini and Usha in particular are tales, without any connection whatsoever with the life of Siva and Parvati, included in the poem to increase its size and to meet needs of the performance which continues for eight days. The section to be performed on the fourth day is yet another instance of an extra-structural episode but it is the first indication of the poet's real project which is undoubtedly to present a Siva shockingly different from his established and formal image.

Soon after his marriage Siva left the house of his father-in-law and went to Kailas with Gauri. Since he had no means to earn livelihood Siva went out to beg. The representation of Siva as beggar may not be the invention of the poet but his entry into the Koch nagar is probably an innovation. In this brief section Siva is represented in his dinosyean aspect. He enters inside the Koch area, inhabited by prostitutes, plays on his trumpet, dances and moves about casting irrestible charm on the young damsels who come running to join the orgy. "The *kuchini* (the prostitutes) are like the flowers in a garden/Sankara is the bee who drinks their honey." This representation of the god with a look almost of lewd abandon, that too soon after his marriage not only creates a jarring effect in the narrative structure, but exhibits clearly the existence of two sets of stories, the ritualistic and the pornographic, yet to be amalgamated into a whole. It is possible that Siva indeed had been conceived as a god of levity and sexual permissiveness in the folk imagination, and the poet only tries to accommodate it within the larger structure of the Śivapurāṇa. He himself admits that his attempt is to construct a *bhadra bhavya* poem *i.e.* a polished and cultured writing. This clearly indicates the existence of a poem in all probability in the oral tradition and confined to people not particularly distinguished for their fine taste and refined manner, Rameshwar found those stories interesting, certainly different from the oft-repeated puranic tradition, and tried to makes a refined work out of the popular crude texts.

As the story proceeds, Siva is completely denuded of his divine glory, not only is he humanised and vulgarised with a wanton glee, but

the whole puranic structure, subverted and disintegrated, finds it too difficult to maintain its class-character. What makes the narrative so exciting is the continuous tension operating within it between the elitist canons of poetry and the folk poetry challenging them. A fierce struggle between the 'high' and the 'low', between canons and anti-canons, between literature and sub-literature gives this poem a dimension not to be found so pronouncedly in any other literary work of medieval period.

Let us try to outlime the main part of the story where Siva is represented as a cultivator. It is Gauri who persides Siva to give up begging and to adopt cultivation as a profession. He, used to the life of indolence and ease, and at the same time conscious of his exulted status refuses to listen to his wife. The consciousness of the divine status and the experience of the mundane existence are in direct opposition. Not only does this create unresolved tension within the divine characters, (which has been tried to explain as *līlā*, the divine sport) but also within the poetic struggle as well. Even gods must have certain justification to incarnate, to assume different forms and shapes and to perform duties of any kind. The eighteenth century Bengali Siva is steeped in such poverty and is so helpless as a social being that he even forgets his divine status. He speaks like the typical Bengali householder: 'it is so degrading for a god to become a cultivator'. He lists the hazards of the profession; it is difficult and strenuous, it is too time-consuming, one has to wait long, too long perhaps, to get the results, and of course there are always vagaries of nature, the drought, the flood, the storm and various other uncertainties. Moreover where to find a piece of land, what about the bullocks, or the plough or the seeds. Gauri, however, is not easy to be conquered by these lame excuses. She is ready with solutions. Ask Indra for a piece of land, and Kubera to get some quantity of seeds, and get the buffallo from Yama, and of course Siva himself has a good-for-nothing bull. There is Bhima at home; he can be gainfully employed in the field. But what about the basic implement for cultivation: the plough? Gauri suggests quickly and unhesitatingly, why cannot the trident of Siva be smelted, and a plough be made out of it. Indeed the trident, the glorious instrument asserting Siva's authority and power, is melt by Visvakarma and a plough is constructed with the iron obtained from it. Siva does not have any farther argument; he is obliged to accept the new occupation without protests.

Several things are to be noticed here. Despite the total denuding of the divine glory of Siva, his links with the pantheon are not completely snapped. Indra, Kubera, Yama, Visvakarma are still there to help him. Bhima, obviously reminiscent of the second Pandava of the *Mahabharata*, finds a place in the narrative, and the frequent visit of Narada, the instigator of quarrels between gods, is part of the attempt to retain mythological structure, which is under the tremendous pressure from a realistic narrative seething within it. The real identity of Indra and Kubera and Yama and Visvakarma, each one of them being a typical representative of the agricultural community, part and parcel of its economic life, are too transparent to be disguised under the theo-mythological costumes. The story narrated by Rameshwar is that of an agricultural labour with all his predicaments, his negotiation with the soil and the seeds, with nature, rains, storms and floods. Siva like many people of the seventeenth and eighteenth century was obliged to look for a new occupation and thus had to adjust himself with new demands of the profession. The initial hesitation involving the degradation of status was soon forgotten and change of occupation brought a new sense of involvement and commitment. Siva notices, like others belonging to the same profession, the changes in the weather, the rains to be specific, and their impact on his new occupation. The rain come first gently soaking the earth, then submerging the field with water and then with all its fury innundating lands and fields and filling the rivers to the brim. Siva realises that life is a hard struggle. This is the life of the cultivator. But mythology suddenly and abruply disturbs the rhythm of the narrative of real life. Gauri wants Siva back even before the completion of his work and the harvest could be garnered. Narada appears and tells Gauri that Siva is in deep love with a Kochini who is extremely dark in complexion but has an intoxicating charm and sexual power. She places her feet on the chest of Siva who lies noiselessly like a dead body. This is of course a clever manipulation of the popular Kali tradition and an attempt to identify the Kochini with Kali, thus legitimizing Siva's infatuation for a black and vivacious women, though an allegory of love. Gauri does not use her divine power to know the truth, but follows Narada obediently and tries to persuade Siva to return home through several ingenuous means. She sends swarms of mosquitoes of very small size to make Siva's stay in the distant field extremely uncomfortable.

Being unsuccessful, she sends more mosquitoes and flies and gnats that cause wounds all over his body, and then she sends leeches in the water and in the soil which cling to his body pertinaciously. These are indeed the common experiences of the cultivators during the rains, and not occasional hazards caused by any divine conspiracy. The detail account of all these afflictions caused to Siva and his brave and tolerant resistance to all of them, the insects and the reptiles, described with a touch of black humour, brings out the miserable existence of innumerable workers toiling in the field, and waiting, helplessly, but with great expectation, for the green and tender corn to mature into golden paddies. The comicality of the situations can hardly gloss the sub-text of human suffering, a folk saga of sowing and reaping. The irony of the narrative, whether intended or not, is that obstructions to the farmer are caused by the same goddess who persuades him to face the challenges of cultivation. The text, thus combines within it two contradictory attitudes, one for grounding the misery and the hardship of the rural poor and other a comicality as perceived by the leisured class. The earlier structure of the story, *i.e.*, its original folk form, free from the mythological jacket was in all probability, a story of an agricultural labour struggling against nature and the oppressive forces of production. In mythology, Gauri, the consort of Siva, becomes identified with these very forces, and the real suffering turns into a divine *lila*. Hence the comicality and also a sharp cleavage of attitudes within the story.

It is necessary to point out that Remeshwar is not the first poet to write on this theme; he was the first to upgrade it and probably to integrate several narratives into one whole within a loose puranic structure. There is a Sanskrit verse to be found in the *Subhāṣaita Ratna Bhāndāgarā* which can be translated as follows

"Beg a piece of land from Rama, seeds from Kuvera, a plough from Valarama, a buffalo from Yama; you have got a bull yourself, and your trident is the plough; I will bring food for you and Kartikeya can take care of the bulls,
Oh, Hara, I am tired of begging, take to cultivation—"
Gauri who said thus, do good to us.

This may not be a very old composition but it certainly was written many years, if not centuries before Rameshwara the 16th century Assamese poet Rama Saraswati's *Bhima Charit*, described as a "light

humorous poem" by an Assamese scholar, one finds Siva represented as a cultivator and Bhima as the keeper of his cowherd. Even in one verse of Vidyapati (Verse 791), Siva has been admonished by his wife to give up begging and to take farming instead. "Break you cot and make a coulter, get your trident smelt and get a plough; engage your bull to work, irrigate the field with the water of Ganga." The *Khoba-hubi* story current in upper and central Assam has also similar references to Siva's cultivation. Siva procures the seeds from Kuvera, a buffalo from Yama, and makes a plough by getting the trident smelt. S.B. Dasgupta refers to an Oriya folk song where Siva appears as a peasant and Parvati like other wives of the peasants bring food for him in the field. His behaviour is hardly god-like, when Paravati is late in bringing the food, he abuses her, and occasionally assaults her physically. It is quite evident that the representation of Siva as an agriculturalist was quite widespread and Rameshwar used these materials to create a new poem.

However, what none of these traditions refers to is Siva's great weakness for women, and the Bengali poem exploits that fully and admirably. When Gauri fails to bring back Siva home, she finally assumes the form of a vivacious *Bagdi* woman, belonging to a low caste, and entices Siva. Here again one notices two interesting features. One, Siva's instructive attraction for a 'low' caste woman suggesting his own subaltern origin, and the folk attempt to appropriate him. Two, the Bagdi persuades Siva to join her in catching fishe, yet another 'lowly' profession beneath the dignity of a member of the upper caste, not to speak of god. Siva cannot reset the sexual advances of the voluptuous woman, carries out all her orders only to be cheated at the end. Whatever be the source of the story, it is clearly a subversion of the ascetic image of Siva, as it was presented in the *Kumārasambhavam*, the most elegant of canonical poems. What the youthful Uma, with the assistance of the god of love, could not achieve, was so easily accomplished by a buxom Bagdi. That she is Uma herself does not aquit Siva from his promiscuous sexual behaviour. Indeed, one notices a continuous inter-play between the conjugal relationship and sexual licence throughout the narrative whether this is due to the powerful influence of Radha legend or the vestiges of the ribaldry that existed in the lower strata of the society is difficult to say precisely. But the episodes of Siva's sexual

adventures formed the basis of the village comedies reminiscent of the Aristotelian hypothesis of the origin of the Attic comedies. It creates a new space of sexual lattitude within the moral parameters of marriage, the partners being not allowed to transgress marital codes. The partners in the game being husband and wife, one of them in disguise, is a recurring theme in the *Śivāyana*. It exposes the unfaithfulness of the husband and the male fickleness as opposed to the feminine steadfastness and adherence to the marital rules. On top of that it also recognizes and celebrates the power of women sexuality as distinct from the motherhood of Hindu theology. The woman in this narrative, however, does not critique the male supremacy nor does it revolt against it, she tries to preserve the "purity" of the house by controlling the wayward husband offering herself as the surrogate of the wife. Undoubtedly the theme has a strong component of humour and hilarity that subdue the coarseness of the sexual implications. The trial and the test, the temptation and the beguiling, the enticement and the titillation all that are involved in such a theme have provided the *Śivāyana* poem with a world of fun and excitement free from any particular moral question. If the priggishness of any reader censors the behaviour of Siva and also of Gauri (as she is also guilty of behaving in the manner of a woman of low virtue), the readers in general would agree that the old philanderer has been rightly punished by the woman, and Siva appears as a pathetic figure, fooled and deceived, symbolizing as it were the victim of moral law.

After the shameful episode with the Bagdi woman, Siva decides to return home. But the news of his amorous exercises are disclosed by Gauri to her sons. They are told not to receive their father who has lost his caste through his association with a low-caste woman. Disgraced and humiliated Siva finds himself even disowned by her family. A reconciliation was finally achieved through the mediation of Narada, who suggests him to adopt a retaliatory measure to humiliate Gauri. Thus begins another episode.

III

This new section develops in the manner to some extent similar to the *Bagdi* woman episodes. Narada instigates Gauri to ask for a pair of *Śākhā*, the bracelets made of conch, the most important item for a Hindu

married woman. He sings the praises of the conch bracelets, which bring good luck to the husband and the family, it is 'the light of the house', the sacred symbol of marriage. She must have them to secure the stability of their conjugal life and to control Siva already known for his lust for women. When asked for a pair of *Śākhā*, Siva, as instructed by Narada, scolds Gauri severely and even tells her that she should ask her rich father to pay for such luxury. Deeply pained by this unexpected harshness from the husband, Gauri leaves her home in anger and proceeds towards her paternal house. Siva tries to prevent her from leaving the house but fails. Then follows a series of episodes in which Siva is found to be repentant and tries of create various obstacles with a view to persuade Gauri to return home. There is a tiger on the way— Siva assumes the form of that beast— their is a severe storm and torrential rains, there is an old and infirm man on the way who tries to molest her. But Gauri overcomes all these hurdles, at times by her supernatural power, and at times by her courage. All the wiles of Siva finally fail. So far as the tiger is concerned, Gauri jumps on it—is it not her favourite mount? The old man who made sexual advances—the old man was Siva himself— was thrown out by Gauri— is it she the goddess who killed so many *asuras*? She could not be deceived by the boatman (again Siva himself) she drank the whole river in one monthful gulp like Agastya. This long and hazardous journey, described in minute detail establishes the superiority of Gauri, both in terms of physical strength and moral power, over Siva. The continuous alternations between the natural and the supernatural, the mortal and the divine bring out clearly the existences of two tiers of perception, the sacred and the profane displayed in the poem. While the divine identities of both the participants in the narrative are pronounced strongly, their human locations are equally foregrounded. the stark realism of the story of Siva the farmer, presenting the grim battle between man and nature is certainly subdued, if not replaced, by an adventure story. The first story is more or less free from all supernatural agencies: the mosquitoes and the leeches are part of the rural nature; Indra and Kuvera, though mythological names, are but representations of the village landlords and money-lenders. Even Siva's infatuation for the Bagdi woman does not have any allegorical significance: it is only an acceptance of the human frailties. Siva, as represented here, is neither a god nor a noble man, but a pathetic human being.

The *Śāṅkhārī* story (*i.e.*, the story of the conch-seller), on the other hand, is much weaker in structure and execution. The intervention of the supernatural (rather expected, almost predictable in this genre and by the listener-community for which these poems are intended) is too frequent resulting in a duel between two deities, and ultimately proclaiming the supremacy of one on the other. If the listner also finds a sub-text of a struggle between the patriarchy, represented by Siva, and the women power, represented by Gauri that is only an additional dimension of the text. The realism of the story, however, is not totally eclipsed. The wife's request for *Śākhā*, the domestic quarrel, the wife's journey to her paternal home, the imposter boatman or the appearance of the molester in a way-side shelter, the rains and the ferocious beasts are all indeed part of the slowly emerging realistic traditions in the eighteenth century preparing the stage for the entrance of human actors replacing the immortals that indeed happened in the following century. But the poet who constructed such a lively narrative of the common man, who deserves both pity and sympathy, changes his course in the second story probably under the demands of the Puranic codes. His intention to write a *bhadra bhavya kāvya* (a refined and elegant poem) creates pressure towards the apothescization of the characters, the heroine in particular. Once she reaches her father's home, she is welcomed not only as the darling of the house but as a goddess. A *pūjā* is arranged. It is interesting to note that *Durgā pūjā* in Bengal is a celebration of the home-coming of the goddess. She stays with her mother only for three days. But here the story is contrived in a manner that her return is not possible unless Siva apologises to her.

Siva being repentant of his rude behaviour and also of his machinations to prevent Gauri's journey, decided to learn the technique of making conch bracelets. Siva, thus is represented in several roles in the narrative: the farmer, the fisherman (also a boatman for a while) and now a maker-dealer in articles of conch-shells. I think all these roles have separate histories. Different communities, the farmers, the fishermen, the boatman and the *Śāṅkhārīs* have their own gods, their protector and benefactor. Either they were separate gods finally merging into one godhead, that of Siva, an instance of merger of several gods into one, or the manifestations of imagination of different communities, each trying to fashion a god on their own model. Xenophanes wrote.

Our gods have flat noses and black skins
Say the Ethiopians. The Thracian say
Our gods have red hair and hazel eyes.
Our farmers made their god a farmer and the fishermen a fisherman.

IV

Having learnt the art of making conch-bangles, Siva arrives at Gauri's place in the guise of an old *Śāṅkhārī*. The description that follows, is in all probability a realistic one, representing the women in the household and their behaviour with the old man. There is a detailed account of how women folks surround the *Śāṅkhārī*, listening to his words in praise of his wires. The old man goes on telling them, first the significance of the bangles, their effect on their lives— these are instances of the folk hymnals praising sacred objects— and then of the 'ceremony' of *Śaṅkha* wearing, a practice still existing in rural Bengal and among the urban traditionalists. And finally, comes the moment for settleing the price after a long process of bargaining. It is a shopping as well as a ritual, yet another example of the co-existence of the sacred and the profane in Hindu life. The pedlar, generally an old man, who comes inside the house, the exclusive preserve of the women, bring along with his sacred merchandise, some fresh air of the outside world, and, occasionally, opportunities of some romantic possibilities for the inmates there. Siva asks a price, an embrace from Gauri. Women started gigling and Gauri too took it kindly despite the outrageous behaviour coming as it is from an old man of her father's age. Gauri's mother, however, is angry and is about to strike him. Gauri admonished the old man not to wish such sinful desire for other's wives, and tells him stories about the moral strength of *Satīs* from various legends. The old man, however, is hardly discouraged by her peroration on the glory of *Satī*. The only price he would accept is her youthful body and nothing else. Finally, Gauri, too, gets furious and asks the men in house to kick the scoundrel out. She tries to break the *Śāṅkhās* into pieces. But all her attempts fail vindicating the imperishability of the magical bangles.

The frequent references to 'disguise' is another interesting feature of the poem. Siva is known for his various 'disguises', the old ascetic in the *Kumārasambhavam* or the hunter in *Kīrātārjuniyāṃ*. The Bengali narrative often present Gauri/Parvati in several disguises, the Bagdi

woman, the *domni* at the ferry, as a part of her strategy to dominate Siva. Generally she assumes the forms of lower class women of sexual attraction. But in the story during the journey to her paternal home, the way she tames the lion and rides upon her, suggests a facile tranagression from her mortal appearance to the divine. This may not be an instance of disguising but of realisation or revelation of her true self-that of the immortal. In the bangle-wearing episode, we will find a similar transgression from the mortal to the divine form, where the necessity of the disguise is reversed; instead of a transformation of the human parameters of caste-occupation-gender it is a transformation from the mortal form to the divine. Having failed to get rid of the bangles, Gauri assumes the form of Kali. Siva abandons his guise and falls under the feet of the terrifying goddess. The episodes concludes with the praises of gods who have been watching the 'play' intently. Happiness returns to the couple,. For the whole day Siva stays in the house of his father-in-law, the mother-in-law cooks rice and vegetables and meat and fish and sweet, and Gauri serves them with delight.

The transformation of Gauri into Kali underlimes the theological anxiety to assert the unity of the two goddesses, so different in their basic attributes, and also a poetic conceit to declare the ultimate superiority of the Tantric goddess over Siva. Throughout the story one notices a continuous tug-of-war between Siva and Gauri, and it is Siva who is always humiliated and disgraced. The *Śāṅkhārī* story finally establishes the superiority of Gauri, although through her manifestation as Kali. The two goddesses, Gauri and Kali belong to two different religious traditions which were slowly coming to terms and became a part of a unifying tradition by the middle of the eighteenth century. Ramprasad, a younger contemporary of Ramshwar, created a body of songs, praising the two goddesses, one representing the tender and gentle aspects of the mother, and one representing the terror and violences. In this poem, Siva has been finally domesticated and defeated by Kali. But the discomfort of the poet in identifying Gauri and Kali is quite clear. Once the terrifying Mother appears and accomplishes the final defeat of Siva, she is quickly replaced by a happy and domestic Gauri helping her mother in the kitchen and serving food to a docile husband.

Rameshwar's poem does not end before he introduces another episode, that of tailorng the bodice of Gauri by Visvakarma. In all

probability, this is yet another story in the Siva-cycle, which has been clearly shunted into the train of episodes that constitute the poem. There is some textual evidence to show that the Visvakarma episode is a later addition to bring the grandfinale. One of the manuscripts, refers to Visvakarma, the divine architect from whom Siva sought help in making the conch bungles. But later Siva changed his mind and 'created' them by his supernatural power. Visvakarma felt unhappy and hurt being denied to serve the goddess. In order to mollify him, Siva asked him to prepare a brassiere for Gauri to celebrate their reunion. Visvakarma accomplished the task in no time and sent that as a present to Gauri to here great delight. It may be pointed out here that *kāñculi nirmāṇ* (stiching of bodice) must have been quite a delicate craft in Bengal at that time. It has been referred several times in contemporary poetry. The bodices used to be decorated not only by floral designs and various animals and fishes, but also with figure from the epics and the *Bhgāvata.*

The union of the divine couple culminates in the bridal chamber specially arranged for them. The lewdness of the reunion, described with uninhibited dalliance has been partly tempered by a puckish sense of humur: Gauri appears, at least for a while, in the form of the *Bagdi* woman. Not only does this provide a link between the farmer story and the bracelet-maker story, as a part of the narratoisial strategy, but also an ingenious attempt to integrate a folk story (with all its ingredients: the low origin of the god, the extra-Marital sexual exploits of Siva, not an ideal exemplar of domestic and conjugal values) with a puranic tradition. There has been a re-enactment of the marriage of Siva within the parameters of a *bhavya* poem ; the sudden and clever surfacing of the Bagdi woman in it indicates clearly the Puranic text cannot submerge the regional subaltern text completely. The appearance of the Bagdi women, therefore, goes beyond the demands of the narrative structure ensuring its unity, but it is indeed an essential requirement of the new poetic genre. The epic traditions have already disintegrated and the new traditions of narrative aspiring to the conditions of purāṇas were already established. This particular poem which chooses a hero, demanded of his epic glory and even puranic status, reflects the upper class anxiety to make room for a new hero. In the all the *maṅgal kāvyas,* gods appear with this divine authority, guiding the fate of the mortal participants in the action. There has been a transformation here: the gods themselves

are the heroes. Or to put if differently, the fate of the characters are determined by themselves.

The poem does not end with the reunion of the hero and the heroine, but with Bhima, attendant of Siva reaping the harvest. Bhima, the constant reminder of the epic character, but stripped of his epic grandeur and reduced to a non-descript poor labourer, was conspicuously side-lined in the *Śāṅkhārī* episode. In the earlier episode Bhima has been presented as a labourer complaining for food and of the adverse conditions in the field. The strong man of the epic is pathetically struggling with the army of mosquitoes and leeches, and frequently wants to run away. But he is also the keeper of Siva's conscience: he quarrels with the *Bagdi* women for enticing Siva, whom he addresses as *Māmā*, and warns him against the sexual advances of the woman. Then there is a sudden silence about his actities in the poem. While Siva is engrossed with his plan to tame Gauri, and to continue with his new role as *Śāṅkhārī*, Bhima, the faithful servant is ever vigilant with his work in the rice field. The happy couple returns home oblivious of the harvest that has ripen by now. It is Bhima he is referred as 'Vrikodora' also— who takes his huge sickle and goes out to the field to grain crops. But when Bhima garners only a little quantity of paddy, Siva torches the field and the rest of the paddy is turned into ashes. The editor of the poem has observed that this is a practice common among the farmers to ensure greater fertility of the soil and prospects of a higher yield next season. He has also observed that it is also a concession to the popular prejudice against the Brahmin occupation as cultivators. The fire can be explained both as a practice for agricultural improvement as well as a censure against people changing occupation by the Brahmanical codes for the stability of the caste hierarchy. Such references to the fire are to be found in several texts. In the *khoba-khubi* story of Assam also there is a reference to fire coming out of the mouth of Parvati who is overjoyous to see the field full of golden paddy. The burnt paddies were separated from the unburnt one, named *āsus* and *śāli*. Siva declared that they will be used by the poor and the rich respectively. Clearly, there has been a confusion between several legends, all connected with the agricultural life of the people and of the various products of agriculture. In this story the fire-god, *Vitihotra*, finally appears before Bhima and promises to give five times more if

he is offered one grain only. The fire myth is introduced in the poem partly as an allegory of the hazards that the farmers face during the harvest season, and also to give the story a theological rationalistic. The poet concludes the narrative, interestingly with a long list of names of paddies of various kinds *Śhasya pūrṇa pṛithiv haila ei mate*; 'Thus the earth, became laden with corn'. Siva and Gauri finally retire to the high heavens, censoring the codes of occupation-caste equation, leaving the stage to Bhima, an agricultural labourer.

*Lee Jeong Ho*

# TAGORE'S INFLUENCE ON THE POETRY OF HUN, YONG WOON (MAN HAE): A NOTE

India and Korea have long been culturally interacting with one another. The introduction of Buddhism to Korea has brought Indian culture with it and, today, there remain similarities in both cultures. Even into the modern times, the two countries have suffered similar fates, although their backgrounds differ, being subjected to foreign occupation and struggling for independence. Both countries experienced socio-political upheavals after liberation followed by a national division, conflicts and civil wars.

Tagore was first introduced to Korea through two articles Jin, Hak-moon (Soon Sung) published in the 1917 November issue of the literary magazine *Chung-Choon* (Youth): 'The World-Renowned Great Poet Rabindranath Tagore of India' and 'Greeting and Farewell to Tagore'. In the first article, Jin offered an overview of Tagore's life and work along with a translation of some of the lyrics from *Gitanjali, The Gardener,* and *The Crescent Moon.* The second article was a record of his first encounter with Tagore in Japan. A group of Korean students including Jin himself met with Tagore who was visiting Japan to give speeches. Jin meticulously described how he had had an interview with Tagore, solicited literary contribution to the magazine and bade farewell. Having earned world wide acclamation as a Nobel laureate, Tagore left in July, 1916 for the United States for speeches and stayed in Japan for four months on the way.

Requested to write a piece to be published in *Youth,* he wrote "The Song of The Defeated", his first poem dedicated to Koreans. The full original poem is as follows:

The Song of The Defeated

My Master has bid me while I stand at the roadside,
to sing the song of Defeat,

for that is the bride whom He woos in secret.
She has put on the dark veil,
hiding her face from the crowd,
but the jewel glows on her breast in the dark.
She is forsaken of the day,
and God's night is waiting for her
with its lamps lighted and flowers wet with dew.
She is silent with her eyes downcast;
she has left her home behind her,
from her home has come that wailing in the wind.
But the stars are singing the love-song of the eternal
to a face sweet with shame and suffering.
The door has been opened in the lonely chamber,
the call has sounded,
and the heart of the darkness throbs with awe
because of the coming tryst.

This poem clearly displays Tagore's sympathy with Koreans (as people whose nations are trampled by foreign forces) and his assurance of freedom and hope. He made two more trips to Japan in 1924 and 1929. Visiting Japan on his way to home from Canada in March 1929, Tagore handed this piece of poem to a *Dong-A* daily journalist from Korea.

In the golden age of Asia
Korea was one of it's lamp bearers,
And that lamp is waiting to be lighted once again
For the illumination in the East

The poem was published in the April 2 issue of the paper as translated by Joo, Yo-han. What beautiful and inspiring words they are! His lyrics, singing his hope for Korea to regain hope and glory as the light of the East were the words of hope and aspiration for Koreans. He personally told the *Dong-A* journalist later to send his message to the Korean people through the paper after the abortive attempt by the paper to invite him for a special speech.

The episode is an affirmation that he was well aware of the sufferings of the Koreans and their resolution for independence. Mahatma Gandhi also sent a letter to the same paper in January 1927, where he hoped "Chosun will be on its own in non-violent ways." The fact bears historical significance that independence activists of India at the time

not only acknowledged but sympathized with the Korean people and encouraged their struggle for liberation.

Tagore labeled World War I "the cremation of the Western civilization". In the U.S and Japan, he publicly assaulted aggressive nationalism of the West, calling it self-absorbed and sheer desire of fight and conquest. Constantly warning the world of the danger of blindly arrogant nationalism, he made no friends among political leaders of the two nations.

More of his literature was translated and published in Korea by Kim, Uk (An Suh) : *The Crescent Moon* in 1924 and *The Gardener* in 1925. The two books were the first literary contact of most contemporary Korean writers and poets with Tagore. Among them was Han, Yong-Woon (Man Hae) who bears comparison to Tagore in many aspects.

Han, Yong Woon (Man Hae, 1879-1944) is one of the great modern Korean poets who have been read and loved with reverence over generation for a mix of popular appeal and outstanding literary achievements. He was also a pathfinder, independence activist, and reformist Buddhist monk, who placed a persistent focus on his nation, people and progressivism throughout the Japanese colonial rule.

Han joined the nation's liberation movement at age 18 by enlisting himself in armed rebels that revolted in his hometown Hong-Ju. The rebels failed in the face of Japanese crackdown, pushing him to enter the Buddhist priesthood at 27. Han continued to actively engage himself in the struggle for liberation, being one of the 33 figures who led the March 1st Independence Movement. The best-known and widely admired of his works, *Silence of Love*, saw the light in 1926, but his faith in the reforms in Chosun Buddhism and popularization of the Buddhist Sutras came in contact with people much earlier in *Revitalizing Buddhism of Chosun* (1910) and *Buddhist Canon* (1914).

His poetic career, however, was not very active. In the literary community of the time where young elites who received education in Japan and were in their 20s prevailed, his book *Silence of Love was* published when he was 47. And the 88 poems in the book were about all he had written in his whole life with the exception of some pieces of Chinese poems, modern lyrics and Korean traditional verse called "Shijo". *Silence of Love* is viewed as one of the greatest achievements

in the history of modern Korean Literature, in the depth of religious philosophy, love for his nation and usage of the Korean language.

While the book sung of the recurring theme of the 1920s' literature— despair and yearning from the loss of love and strong will to go beyond it, it reached the dimension of metaphysical cognition, distinguishing itself from the pack of other poetry of the same days. Here is one of his poems *Hymn*.

Hymn

My love, you are gold refined a hundred times.
Be blessed with heavenly love till mulberry roots turn to red corals.
My love! O love! O the first steps of the morning sun!

My love, you know well that justice is heavy and gold is light.
Sow seeds of bliss in the wild fields of a beggar.
My love! O love! Hidden sound from an ancient paulownia!

My love, you love spring, light and peace.
Be a merciful Bodhisattva and shed tears of compassion
on the breasts of the weak.
My love O love! Spring wind on the sea of ice!

Love, in this poem, leads to the sets of transcendent values as revealed in 'the first steps of the morning sun', 'hidden sound from an ancient paulownia', and 'spring wind on the sea of ice'. The morning sun signals another same day in the physical world, but implies springy steps of a new refreshing day in his literary domain. Paulownia is a mere plant, but the sound it makes when it is made into 'kayakum' (traditional Korean string instrument) is already contained in it when it is still in the form of a tree. This is in the same context as in the chilliness of winter heralded warm breeze of spring. Love, in this poem, does not remain in the physical world, but is linked to the nature that is contained intrinsically in the matter.

Among his lyrics in *Silence of Love* is "On Tagore's *The Gardener*".

On Tagore's *The Gardener*

My friend, you make me cry like a flower
that blooms on a loved one's grave

My friend, you gladden me like my loved one
discovered in the desert night
without a single bird in view.
You are the fragrance of a bleached bone breaking
out of an age-old grave to fill the air.
You are a song of hope in despair, gathering fallen flowers
to weave a wreath to hang on a bough.
My friend, how you weep over shattered love!
Tears cannot bring back the fallen petals
to bloom again.
Sprinkle tears not on the faded flowers
but on the dust under the tree.
My friend, the sweetest smell of death
cannot tempt the lips of bone.
Do not set a net of gold song on the grave;
do not plant a blood-stained flag on the grave.
The spring wind can tell how the earth moves
thanks to a poet's song.
My friend, I feel ashamed.
I tremble with shame to hear your song,
because I hear it alone, parted from my love.

This poem is a manifestation of Han's infatuation with Tagore's literature. Some critics say that Han disapproved of Tagore for the lack of historical perspective and will to act while applauding his literary works. In much the same way, Gandhi also treaded on a different path from Tagore's on how to resist the British rule in the 1920s.

While Gandhi was a staunch believer of non-violence, peace, and humanism, Tagore embodied peace and humanism in more engaged ways although their views overlapped in the ultimate ways. To Gandhi, love or non-violence was a road to truth and truth was God. Truth, love, and God were inseparable in his philosophy. In Tagore's view, humanism was God, meaning men could reach God by loving one another.

Evidence that Han came in contact with Tagore's works can also be found before *Silence of Love*. Han's poetic career started with *The Mind Run* in *The Thinking Mind*, a magazine of which he himself was the publisher. The first and second issue of the magazine dedicated some of their pages to *Sadhana* which they claimed to be "the work of Tagore, Indian philosopher". Whosever work the translation was, it

suggests Han, the publisher, had deep interests in philosophy and literature of Tagore.

A closer examination at *Silence of Love* and *Gitanjali*, the masterpieces of the two great poets, reveals the common denominator in their themes and philosophy Han sympathized with Tagore's ideas because there were common threads between Buddhism, Han's philosophical foundation, and Upanisad, the basis of Tagore's ideas and humanism. Han himself sought patriotism and humanism with roots in Asian traditions and thoughts and Buddhism. If Tagore sung religious and spiritual mysteries in his poems, Han's *Silence of Love* also fell into the same category. Not only were the both books prose-like poetry, but they also portrayed the same subject.

Love' in *Silence of Love* may allude to the motherland, nation, Buddha, lover, truth or different things to different people. To Han, However, it refers to the absolute being something for which he would be willing to give everything— a source of life, the most noble being that can save mankind and his nation. The same concept for Tagore is 'Thou' or the *absolute being or Brahma*, the essence of every being in the universe. It is may view that Han's 'Love' and Tagore's 'Thou' are their own ways of dubbing one same thing. Here is "Silence of Love", the title piece of *Silence of Love.*

Silence of Love

Tearning herself away from me,
Love is gone, gone is my love
she has gone on a little path that
threads over the splendor of a green
hill into an autumn-tinted forest.
Our last oath, shining and enduring
like a gold-mosaicked flower,
has turned to cold ashes, blown
away in the breath of wind.
I remember her poignant first kiss;
its memory has wrought a complete
change in the direction of my destiny,
and withdrawn into oblivion.
I hear not her sweet voice;
I see not her fair looks.

Since it is human to love, I, alert,
dreaded a parting to come when we met.
The separation came so suddenly as a shock
it broke my heart with renewed sorrow.
Yet I know parting can only destroy our love
if it causes vain tears to fall.
I would rather convert the surge of this
sorrow onto the summit of hopefulness.
As we dread parting when we meet,
so we promise to meet again when we part
Though my love is gone, I am not lost to love;
An untiring love-song embraces the silence of love.

This song recaptured his commitment to correcting wrongs in the real world that was repeatedly seen throughout the book. Han's strong will was strewn in this piece to seek meeting in parting, love in tears and hope in sorrow.

While Han implied, in "I Know Not", resuscitation of his nation and people by depicting their faith in independence as well as their sufferings, a lyric in *Gitanjali* stands good comparison to it.

I Know Not

Whose step is the pawlonia leaf
that falls silently in vertical wavelets
against the windless sky?

Whose looks are those patches of blue
that keep through the cracks in the dark clouds,
driven by the west wind
after a long rain?

Whose breath is this subtle scent
that wafts through the green moss
on ancient trees-no flower near-
to lure the quiet sky above an ancient pagoda?

Whose song is the little stream
that flows God knows from where,
tinkling over the pebbles?

Whose ode is the evening glow
that graces the dying day as it steps,
lotus-flower soft, on the infinite sea

and touches the edgeless sky
with its delicate hands?

The burnt-out ashes turn to earth again.
Whose lamp is my heart
that burns all night long,
I know not for whom?

WHERE the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action–
Into that heaven of Freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

The poems of Han and Tagore were also similar in their meditativeness and mystical tones.

Although Tagore was criticized for lack of revolutionary ideas by some of Korean critics and literary figures, his path changed later in life. He asserted to his fellow Indians in 1930, "although painful, there is no other way than keep attacking the chains strangling our country, if we are ever to free ourselves". He also had sharp words for Whites who colonized Africa, "barbaric greed of people who believe they are civilized often turns into acts against humanity". His idea of writer's moral was described in another writing as follows:

Poet!
What are you doing sitting out?
Get up.
All you have is life, only life
Only the life you shall keep
Dedicate the life first...

Tagore foretold, "Fate will be turned. England will withdraw from its Indian colonial camp", and died in 1941, six years too soon to see his prophecy fulfilled. Han also did not live to see his nation liberated, breathing his last in May 1944, a year before the Independence.

*Indra Nath Choudhuri*

# MORDERNISM AND *HIND SWARAJ*

In the post-modernist period, it has become essential to define our modernism particularly when the drive in the name of globalisation and the urge to bring every corner of the earth under the hypnotic spell of the most 'modern' lifestyle and its consumerist ethos have attacked the very core of our plural existence. Globalisation is homogenisation, and the forces of global capital create an economic system which is not sustainable and inequitable, and does not allow alternative approaches to life. In a country which is multi-lingual, multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-ethnic, this kind of a situation has created a crisis of existence.

In the post-colonial period, immediately after 1947, the effort was to introduce the western approach to development, technological change and western modernisation, as the true answer for India's economic progress. Now one realises that by borrowing from the West one cannot bring about change and enter the realm of modernity. Modernity indicates progress, it indicates advancement, it deals with the realities of life, and hence it is essential to define our modernism and to know where we stand and what our agenda is for all round progress.

We should not forget the words of Jawharlal Nehru that the country was being reborn through an ordeal, and not through the modernising influence of foreign rule. He said, "Out of that tussle and conflict between a nation's soul and a foreign dominating power, modern India took shape." Before that it was Mahatma Gandhi who said, "India is in danger of losing her soul. She cannot lose it and live. She must not, therefore, lazily and helplessly sit. I cannot escape the mad onrush of the West. She must be strong enough to resist it for her own sake and that of the world." That soul about which both Gandhi and Nehru were worried, is in danger of losing its identity, particularly when it is said again and again that if we do not become modern in western ways, we cannot progress.

*Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature*, Volume XXXX, 2002-2003.

Gandhi, in his *Hind Swaraj*, written in 1909, made an attempt to defy the tendency of imitating the western civilization and western technology and the Parliamentary system, and search for our own ways of progress and advancement or modernity. Gandhi's approach was not to create a tussle between *swadeshi* (indigenous) and *videshi* (foreign), but to warn us about the danger of developing a colonial mentality or mental colonisation. Tagore also said in those days that true modernism is the freedom of mind, not slavery of taste; it is independence of thought and action, not tutelage under European school masters.

In 1784, Immanuel Kant, in a short essay, 'Enlightenment', observed that enlightenment means to be free from others' control. To be self-sufficient, this mental freedom allows you to come out and start thinking independently with reference to your contemporary life. Kant was the first person to take up the structure of the contemporary world as the subject for his philosophical pursuit. In fact, this was pointed out by Michel Foucault. Kant was not talking about the crisis of enlightenment, or its historical development or historical result. He was talking about the way the present was different from the past. In this difference he was trying to draw out the meaning of enlightenment, or the definition of modernism.

Tagore said that true modernism is freedom of mind. He observed, "You must apply your Eastern mind, your spiritual strength, your love of simplicity, your recognition of social obligations in order to cut out a new path for this great unworldly car of progress shrieking out its loud discards as it runs." In another essay he said, "Once you did solve the problems of man to your own satisfaction and evolved your own art of living— all this you must apply now to the present situation and out of it will arise a new creation and not a mere repetition, a creation which the soul of your people will own for itself and proudly offer to the world as its tribute to the welfare of man."

By redefining the terms of discourse in terms of the creative expression of Asian autonomy and individuality in the pursuit of 'true modernity' in all fields, Tagore and Gandhi were setting, as it were, a fresh agenda to understand our modernity. The following words from Gandhi were among the initial expressions of the autonomy of the mind and spirit in an environment which did not allow any questioning of the hegemony of the West, "My resistance to Western civilisation is

really a resistance to its indiscriminate and thoughtless imitation based on the assumption that Asiatics are fit only to copy everything that comes from the West."

It is against this slavish intellectual milieu that Gandhi launched his strong protest, and with him began the tradition of questioning and exploding many a myth about the "modernising" and "civilising" role of colonialism in non-western societies, which had been propagated by colonial ideologies. P.C. Joshi is correct in observing that with Gandhi began the tradition of subjecting western assumptions and premises to critical inquiry, interpretations and judgments about non-western societies and civilisations. Gandhi alone had discerned as a true seer the ominous potential inherent in the evil tendencies of western civilisation. Others had rejected colonialism, but not the western model of modernity.

In Western terminology, modernism is a breaking away from established rules, traditions and conventions and implies fresh ways of looking at man's position and function in the universe, and inheres in some cases remarkable experiments in form and style. In India, modernism as a phenomenon or value, is not an absolutely unrelated one without reference to the past or the future. It absorbs in it traditional values as well as new innovations, and is indicated by the term "continuity'. It is essential to do that, because, for example, however innovative classical vocalists, Bhimsen Joshi and Kumar Gandharva, may be, they can never be termed modern singers like jazz or rock singers.

But for all practical purposes, in the Indian situation, whatever is western is modern, using the analogy, westernisation is modernisation. There is no doubt that the longest corpus of ideas, thoughts, modes and methods etc., of our life in the present and recent times are admittedly western by origin, yet the fact remains that in the process of our becoming modern something was happening within ourselves, that, in spite of our acceptance of western modernisation, we were doubtful about its value and results, and were constantly searching for our own modernity.

Rajanarayan Basu wrote a book, *The Previous and the Present Age* (*Sekāl ār Ekāl*) in Bengali in 1873, and concluded that the previous age was more modern than the present age, which is the age of decadence. He came to this conclusion by some very objective observations, like in this age man is not as healthy as he was in the past. One can perceive a change in their natural predisposition. Now people are not Godfearing.

Kindness and simplicity are missing. The social structure is now controlled by the Government machinery. Smallness of character is common now. One may draw a meaningful conclusion out of these observations that there cannot be a homogeneous modernity by ignoring time, space, milieu and society, and hence, unique features of modernity are to be derived on the basis of the historical situation, reason and cognition. In other words, there is no universally accepted definition of modernity. With the help of reason, cognition or the historical situation, one can discover the special features to understand one's modernity.

In 1904, Tagore wrote *Svadeśī Samāj*, and after 25 years, he endorsed the views given in that article. According to him, in nation-dominated countries, the core of the country remains encased in its nationhood. In society-dominated countries, the core of the country is spread all over the place. During the British rule this core was attacked. In village after village, where social *swaraj* existed, Government rule ultimately controlled it. Western modernism attacked the core of our existence. Swami Vivekananda said in 1902 that imitation is not civilisation. He further said, "I am in favour of old orthodoxy. It has many limitations, but even then I believe in that. One, who believes, has the strength to stand on his feet. I am not in favour of modern European civilisation." In fact, Swami Vivekananda made a scathing criticism of western civilisation, and one may seek the reason for taking such an exterme position.

Mahatma Gandhi also took an extreme position in *Hind Swaraj*, the kind of position only a great poet or a visionary is capable of taking. Poet Blake once said that all extremes open the gates of heaven. Truth is not revealed with liberal views, but with extreme views. In the introduction to *Hind Swaraj* Gandhi explains: (a) his aim is to serve the country; (b) to search for the truth; and (c) accordingly to work in life. Today, we realise that *Hind Swaraj* is the first critique of modern civilisation.

It is a futuristic critique of every development. Today, development has almost become a religion. Gandhi gave his critique about this idea of development and also gave his critical view against the modern world system. There were two-three reasons for taking an extreme view. By criticising the railways, he tried to deglamourise his opponents, but at

the same time showed quite a lot of farsightedness. One may question his reason for calling the Parliament sterile. Our Parliament bye-laws have abolished untouchability and dowry but they are very much prevailing in the society and it is almost a mockery of the Parliament. One also knows well that the winning party makes use of the Parliament. MPs have turned politics into diplomacy. Gandhi said that unethical politics is wrong.

Instead of the westernised middle-class intelligentsia, who were at the forefront of the Independence movement, and at the centre of all activities, Gandhi took the side of those who were at the periphery, the peasants, and for this he had to de-intellectualise politics, but he was not against intellectualism. He was, in fact, against intellectual-based modernism. His effort was to bring to the forefront the peasants, Harijans and women, and, therefore, he was also in favour of de-Brahminisation, and searched for beauty in our simplicity, poverty and slowness. One may find some kind of rigidity in it, but he was against the western role of making us civilised on the basis of industrialisation, science and the concept of progress which would, in fact, in the long run, favour casteism and exploitation. In opposition to this, he took the side of folk Hinduism, i.e., *Lokapaksha of Hindutva*, or welfare of the people.

Gandhi also knew that the modern process of extending the power of colonialism by initiating the process with western knowledge and progress could have made us only receptors of modernity. We could never have become the creators of modernity, and hence his effort was to divert our attention from the 'illusion of universal modernism', and search for a space where we shall become the heroes of our own modernity.

We should not forget, the western modernity had been used to favour the continuance of India's slavery. It was said again and again that for India's salvation British rule was essential. Even the western Indologists' approach to Indian reality, eulogising only the past and creating a dichotomy between the past and the present, and emphatically stating that India did not have a present, and for creating its present it would have to go to the West, which resulted in the development of the famous concept, westernisation is modernisation.

Going the western way will not help us, and, therefore, Mahatma Gandhi, at the beginning of the century, declared *swaraj* in his *Hind*

*Swaraj*. It does not mean only self-rule or freedom, *swaraj* also means the protection and continuation of Indian way of thinking, seeing, perceiving and experiencing reality. It means .strengthening ourselves from within, so that we may challenge and transform the existing system of development of the concept of modernity, and create our own models of development and modernity, which will be in pursuance with the traditional holistic view of man living in harmony with nature and society, as well as exploring new innovations. This is possible if one understands the terms *Kula* and *Śīla* in the Indian situation. *Kula* is heredity, inheritance, tradition. *Śīla* is the making of a man, his demeanour and personality, which however, is conditioned by his *Kula*. *Śīla* in its own given time and space goes on discarding elements of *Kula* which have lost their potency, and in the process, generates new modes of thought and action, and thereby, ensures the continuity of culture which enriches and invigorates the *Śīla*, making our present sharp and effective, and hence, in this context, both tradition and innovations are important. One who understands the *Kula* and *Śīla* concept of our existence understands well, that for us, both the wings and the roots are important. The interpenetration of India's pluralistic cultural tradition with the new elements of contemporary western civilisation should be obtained for our modernity to define its place and role in a fast changing world. Gandhi explained it well, "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." He further stated (*Young India*) that this synthesis would naturally be of the Indian Swadeshi type, where each culture is assured its legitimate place, and not of the American pattern where one dominant culture absorbs the rest, and where the aim is not towards harmony, but towards an artificial and forced unity. The challenge, therefore, is not a search for *swadeshi* only, but *swaraj* also for the creation of categories of modernism. The choice Gandhi offered was, therefore not tradition versus modernism, but the choice of both versus the forced acceptance of one. Our future lies in our search for qualities or principles which can explain our present-day modernity. To establish this modernism, it is essential to show courage to reject the established modernity. In the days of the freedom movement it was needed, and Gandhi showed us the way.

In *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi's effort was to create a situation so that (a) we may know ourselves, and (b) we may know our weaknesses. To know ourselves means to know our modernity and for that he gave us a model :

1. Acceptance of the old civilisation will lead you to talk about *swaraj*.

2. Civilisation is a way to perform your duties which in other words means to follow the rules of ethics or the rules of civilisation. Following the rules of ethics is to have control over your mind and senses and to have control means to know yourself.

About the rules of civilisation, Gandhi says the violence is not the reply to our pain and sorrow. Keeping in view our civilisational norms, it is essential that for our self-protection we opt for *ahimsa* (Non-violence) and *satyagraha* (Passive resistance). These are the rules of civilisation. Non-violence is a spiritual concept. By using it against military and economic powers, Gandhi turned it from a weak concept into a powerful one. By passive resistance, he created an active situation. In place of the suffering of the victim, he glorified the suffering by turning it into the suffering of a *satyagrahi*. If you follow the ethics of civilised living, you remain away from *bhoga* or materialism. Materialist lust is the aim of modern civilisation, and for that we need technology. Technology is destroying ecology and materialist lust is fanning violence. Ecology and violence are the two big challenges for all of us. There is only one way to save ourselves, and that is to stay united with ecology. This was the old Indian way. Violence disregards the human body. Religious militancy, a certain political ideology, the hunger for sex as part of the consumer culture— all have made the body a non-entity. The body is the seat of God. Our old metaphors *anga-angi*, *deha-dehi* and *pura-purush* a indicate that God stays in the body. These metaphors can be useful to avoid the patterns of violence. Gandhi used *daya* (kindness) as the origin of *dharma* (duty). Through *satyagraha* he talked about *dayabāla* (strength of kindness) and *ātmabala* (strength of the soul). He did not limit himself, like the modern intelligentsia, to decolonisation. Decolonisation is limited to self and society, it does not say anything about the others. To make a self-definition of culture and society, and freedom from foreign rule is decolonisation. In *swaraj*, the other is included, wherein the freedom of both the coloniser and the colonised

is involved and hence Gandhi could say that our battle for freedom was to bring peace in the world. *Hind Swaraj*, in this way, gives us an alternative value system. It is the biggest characteristic of Indian modernism.

In India, nothing is rejected, new alternatives are created which become part of the continuity of thought and creativity. This is the Indian way of thinking. Our thinking is not logo-centric and exclusive, but symbolic and inclusive. The West develops through substitution. It rewrites itself again and again. India develops through accommodation. New ideas may supplant older ones, but the older ones linger on. They are allowed to coexist with what is new. Here you do not reject to create your modernity. Alternatives are suggested and hence, *Hind Swaraj* discusses the freedom of the self, knowing of the self, and does not talk only of development, so that more wealth is produced, but reflects on such a world and people by means of which one can have *swaraj*.

In fact, in place of any synthesis of the East and the West, or India's civilisational categories and the values of western modernism. Gandhi accepted them as opposites to be interpenetrated to create a structure for our modernity to come to exist. Hence, he even repudiated tradition, as was done by many social reformers in the past, or in histories. The interpenetration of India's pluralistic cultural tradition, with the new elements of contemporary western civilisation, particularly the liberal and humanistic correctives, should be obtained for our modernity to define its place and role in a fast changing world. The challenge, therefore, is not just a search for *swadeshi*, but *swaraj* for the creation of categories of modernism. Our future lies in our search for qualities or principles which can explain our present day modernity.

*Hind Swaraj* exposed the inner enemy by deep questioning. It exposed their basic terms and decoded their sign languages. It encouraged cultural plurality. In fact, *swadeshi*, or vibrant Indianness, emerges only when you understand it in our pluralistic context. It is said that if we take the popular slogan, unity in diversity, then we realize that with overstressing diversity, one begins to see unity. And if one insists on looking for unity in India, then what one sees is diversity. This model of diversity leading to unity is unique for India. What is revealed through constant exploration is a diverse India, composed of many races, many civilisations, many regions, many religions and many

languages. The unique thing is that discovery of each part only leads to the exploration of the other, and ultimately to the whole, which can be viewed in the grand design offered by Gandhi in his concept of the "Oceanic circle wherein life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom." But it will be "An oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual using language with their local, regional, pan-Indian link and national identities", till at last, the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are an integral unit. It is this solution— unity through acknowledgment of differences— that India has to offer to the world. This cultural plurality goes against the whole idea of global modernism, which tends to increase homogenisation of cultures.

The thrust of Gunnar Mydral's argument in his book, *Asian Drama*, that traditional societies cannot modernise unless they alter their traditional institutions, beliefs and values, to suit the demands of development which leads towards globalisation or homogenisation, is erroneous. The forces of global capital create an economic system which is quite evidently not sustainable and equitable, and does not allow alternative approaches to life. All resistance is liquidated or coopted. *Hind Swaraj* was a warning against this kind of unipolar situation, which can be so harmful to India. Gandhi, therefore, talked of *swadeshi* and *swaraj*, and consequently decentralisation of power and search for the main threads of the ideal Indian society in villages. To bring the village to the centre, it became essential to talk about *swadeshi*. This was not going back, but a search for the centre. To make a village self-dependent is the way of *samavāya* (cooperation), and that is the way to truth, according to Gandhi.

Gandhi was quite against showing too much concern for tradition, which can develop into a concept of nativism leading to fundamentalism. He had a "critical" openness and took full note of the importance of one's cultural background, without denying what there is to learn from elsewhere, and hence, created a structure by interpenetrating India's cultural traditions with the new elements of contemporary western civilisation, to define our modernity. Gandhi drew very much from dissident western thinkers like Rousseau, Thoreau, Emerson, Ruskin and many others, and assimilated their insights for the reconstruction of his

own intellectual world-view and his own methodology. He accepted both the concepts of 'critical insiders' and 'creative destruction'. Critical insiders are those who criticise detrimental aspects of tradition and change it from within by creating new formulations. "Creative destruction' is not to attack only, but through modification, adaptation and reconstruction create better insights. In other words, changing from within and creating new perceptions by remodelling the outside forces are what Gandhi presented as his own agenda to understand our modernity. This is an alternative to development and also the traditional way to empower oneself.

There is much wisdom in this critical openness of Gandhi, which includes the valuing of a dynamic adaptable world, rather than one that is constantly policing external influences and fearing 'invasion' of ideas from elsewhere. The concept of *kula* and *śila,* transferred by Gandhi into *swadeshi* and *swaraj,* justifies this critical openness. In other words, this allows one to retrieve, rediscover and redefine elements of culture in a creative way, by a return of pride in one's roots, while looking ahead.

*Moinak Biswas*

# BEYOND THE SUBJECT OF DIFFERENCE: ON A PERSISTENT PLOT IN MANIK BANDYOPADHYAY

## THE SELFHOOD DEBATE

The literature on Indian selfhood has been consistent on the point that it is different from the Western paradigm of the bourgeois, secular, modern individual. Social psychology and anthropology are two areas where much effort has been spent on formulating this distinction, often drawing on Indian philosophical traditions. We have a three thousand year old tradition of thinking the *atman*, it is pointed out, and what seems to be the lack of a full-blown individual in Indian or South Asian societies is actually complemented by a complex and highly sophisticated imagination of the self. The internal divisions of Indian philosophy do not find much mention in this kind of argument, which tend to conflate the whole tradition with the *Advaita* line of thinking. [1] A philosopher like Krishnachandra Bhattacharya, writing in 1930, would not accept the division of labour underlining the assumption that Western theory of the subject talks about the Western subject and Indian theory about the Indian subject. He writes about subjectivity as a process, and about the role of utterance in that process, initiating a dialogue between the notion of self-realisation in Indian philosophy and German idealist thought. [2] As one recent philosopher has put it, 'he speaks as if Kant and Shankara were equal parts of the Indian intellectual tradition.' [3] This was before Radhakrishnan et al helped construct the whole of Indian philosophy as religious, intuitive and *moksha*-oriented. Such traditions are brought into operation only in relation to modernity. In a memorable essay, A.K. Ramanujan argued that the transformation of the multiple, context-specific Hindu practices into a 'Hindu view of life' in the hands of Radhakrishnan and the passage from the laws of Manu to the Indian constitution are both examples of modernisation. [4] Ramanujan characterizes the two ways of thinking, Western and Indian, by two laws of grammar.

*Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature,* Volume XXXX, 2002-2003.

Western thinking is primarily context-independent, Indian thinking primarily context-specific. When we Indians build houses, the inside tends to merge with the outside, in our narratives, characters tend to merge with the scene; in utterance, the speaker is figured in relation to the listener; our traditional law does not work on the basis of the Kantian 'act as if' but has specific codes for specific subjects. All this means that the wall of separation between the I and the non-I is not erect enough. Our individual, traditionally, would carry the techniques of living around in a toolbox; his existence would resemble a bricolage.

What is said there with fond humour, pitched at a palpable distance from both the two worlds, and with emphasis on tendencies liable to be inverted, is turned into essential characterisations in the literature on selfhood. Among the psychoanalysts working in the area, Sudhir Kakar has talked about the fuzzy separation of the inside and outside in terms of the weak separation between the ego and external objects in India. On this ego pre-rational thought and primary processes have a greater sway. At one point he went on to identify these as the signs of 'underdevelopment' of the Indian ego.[5] There are others who have reached similar conclusions, proposing by and large that the Indian ego has not won its independence from the 'we-self', 'familial self' or mythical determinations.[6] In the work of Ashis Nandy the picture gets a little more complicated. He distributes the self-types across the borders between East and West, colonialism becomes in his scheme the imprisonment of both Indian and Western consciousness. In his critique of the 'technologized', 'over-developed', 'hyper-masculine' self, the underdeveloped ego finds a positive role to play.[7] The curious thing about such psychoanalysis is that one hears about the secret, lost, possible or retrievable selves, but not about the unconscious *per se*. Consequently, the difference between the categories of self and subject cannot be brought into play. We will argue that by introducing the dimension of the subject it is also possible to reconsider the whole centrality of the modern and non-modern split.

Anthropology supplements philosophy in this discourse, it has a lot to say about our 'different selfhood'. A classic statement can be drawn from the last lecture of Marcel Mauss, which he called 'A Category of the Human Mind : The Notion of Person; the Notion of Self'[8] (1938).

Mauss tells us the story of how the person (*personne*) evolved from personage as asocial entity and from person/mask to person as a legal entity to person as moral and psychological entity to person as 'moi' or self. Eighteenth-century Europe provides the backdrop to the final stage of this narrative. Mauss thinks India had the person like all societies; moreover, it had a very sophisticated theory of the person. But it was the categories of Indian thought that did not allow *personne* to evolve into *moi*. It was the combination of Greek thought, Latin social techniques, the construction of the citizen in law and ethics, Christianity and Cartesian thought that made that evolution possible in the case of Europe. This evolutionary narrative has faced criticism, but the map Mauss presents has provoked a lot of later thinkers. At the end he says this self is a recent invention and might become obsolete one day. Michael Foucault will echo the statement later in his *Order of Things*.

Area Studies has been particularly active in building alternative models for the South Asian subject (Louis Dumont's work on the caste system, *Homo Hierarchicus*, 1970, being one of the landmarks). Two well-known area studies scholars once said there is no individual in South Asian societies, what we have instead may be called 'dividuals', compounds made up of exchangeable, divisible symbolic elements. The exchange keeps in place both the mobility of the individual and the immobility of the social hierarchy. [9] A Srilankan anthropologist objected that he has never seen any diviual in his village. We are looking for the wrong thing, he says, and hence cannot find it, it is a language trap. [10] The fact that we cannot escape certain common terms of description or a certain languages should alert us to a limitation in the argument of difference. [11]

A new theoretical zeal has been brought to the debate by post-colonial studies. Difference itself is a central conceptual category in their procedure. The word 'subject' is used more often than 'selfhood' in these writings, but it remains largely interchangeable with 'identity'. The critique of orientalist discourse questions the logic of picturing the different as the 'other', but in a second move, difference is made into an absolute value—we are constituted by difference. Can the logic of self and other be overcome in this procedure? In his recent book, *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty presents an interesting

analysis of the two histories of capital. The history of capital embraces even the history of the world that is not created by it but which enters its domain. Capital's history is thus marked internally by difference. Chakrabarty outlines the motions of a universal project here even as he critiques the universalizing mission of the European subject or European modernity. As he goes on to evoke what he calls the histories of belonging in Indian society one is left a little confused as to what makes these life-worlds totally inaccessible to history *per se*. His argument against historicism, against the logic of universal development or evolution is clearer. The non-modern self is not our past self, one has to write the history of other ways of being human or get stuck with the "waiting room theory" of stages of historical development. He takes examples from novels, memories, women's writings and lyric poetry to illustrate his point that the interiorized individual is discovered in our literature at a certain stage, but the individual in general is not given in the Western, modern matrix of private and public; it is a combination of modern and non-modern, non-secular ingredients. [11]

The question that should be raised here is whether it is the availability of a subject we are talking about, or the availability of a concept of the subject, or both. For it is one thing to say that a social or cultural formation does not have a specific experience of selfhood, and quite another to say that it does not have access to a certain discourse of selfhood. One shouldn't have any problem recognizing that our self/ ego/individual is different, it obviously is. But there is another question which is pertinent to the notion of the subject : the same subject does not obtain everywhere, but when I grasp the Western subject as an Indian subject, when I claim to have understood that subject and become aware of myself as different from it I come to take a position within a conceptual field of the subject where theoretical explanation has a universal function. It should be possible to imagine a common language that will name the two subjects in terms of difference. To this language the Indian does have access, there is no reason why one should be falling into the trap of universalism by accepting this. A pure notion of difference ends up disavowing all relations, but the specific is always given in relation to other specifics that are there to be named (and transformed) [12]. The question of availability of discourses becomes

important here, and it becomes necessary to stress the moments when the local forms are marked not by a dichotomy of modern and non-modern selves or narrative procedures, but by enunciations that work through that dichotomy. It is possible to show from examples of literature that a simple difference theory, the modern-non-modern or the historical-non-historical division that postcolonial studies maintains, might have brought neglected paradigms of thinking to light but cannot say much about a certain project that was undertaken in Indian society within the colonial period. The character of the so-called colonial subject becomes complex in art from the time of Tagore; and as we come to confront the literary practice of the following generation there seems to be enough reason to question the adequacy of the category of the non-modern subject.

In the following discussion, I shall try to make the point by looking at Manik Bandyopadhyay's experimentation with the novel in the 1940s. In Manik one finds the best examples of the radical direction to which the realist impulse of the 1940s could be inflected, so that it does not remain trapped within its bourgeois modern functions, but takes on an avant-garde role. Bearing witness to the political upheaval of the 40s, Manik decided to stage the drama of the subject as a drama of transformation of selves. It may be worthwhile to take a brief look at that extraordinary development.

## THE DRAMA OF THE SUBJECT

Manik Bandyopadhyay (1908-56) is known to his readers mostly through his early novels written the 1930s (mainly, *Putul Nacher Itikatha*, *Padma Nadir Majhi* and *Diva Ratrir Kavya*, all published in 1936) and the short stories written in the mid-1940s (a popular selection of which is *Uttarkaler Galpa Sangraha*). His novels from the 1940s have met with mixed popular success because, after having mastered it, he took the novel form through a complex political experimentation in the decade. He was to prove the most poignant literary witness to the 1940s. During those years of ferment Manik's excavation of the middle-class individual psyche — a continuation of the project undertaken by the post-Rabindranath generation of writers — would come to an end. He would now launch

what looks like a political philosophical investigation of the subject. It is in a sense the negation of the bourgeois individual that is at issue here, which is difficult to grasp either in terms of the 'different' individual or the 'not yet' individual. The work of the period has been discussed in terms of realism, and has been often found failing to conform to narrative discipline. [13] The problem seemed to stem from an imbalance in the treatment of psychology ending up as an imbalance in realism (as excessive, ruthless and formless). Whereas, it is clear from Manik's own admissions (for example, his preface to a collection of stories in 1943) that under the political impact he was trying to step beyond the investigation of the self (which is almost always the investigation of the middle-class self) into a space where characters and events can be seen in their conceptual formation.

Critics have divided Manik's career into two major periods, Freudian and Marxist. He joined the Communist Party in 1944. Hence, among the novels we are thinking of, *Ahimsa* (1941) and *Catuskon* (1942) would belong to the earlier phase, *Pratibimba* (1943) would be in between, and *Darpan* (1945), *Cintamani* (1946) and *Cinha* (1947) would fall in the later phase. [14] What seems more important to point out now is that though the shift to a Marxian ideology is apparent in the subject matter, there is no compartmental division between the 'Freudian' and the Marxist Manik. We need to think of a moment in which Marx and Freud are contemporaries in his work. One begins to grasp the moment as one turns to a plot that connects almost all the novels mentioned above.

That plot is laid out in *Ahimsa* for the first time. The time is 1941, the title is *Ahimsa* (non-violence), but Manik tells us it has no reference to contemporary political persons or movements. [15] One has all the more reason to suspect the novel is about Gandhi. It is about the construction of the self, and who else could embody the drama of that construction more than Gandhi in his time? [16] It is, however, not the immanent self but the dynamics of its construction, the structural aspect of it that becomes important in Manik's plotting. At this structural level the modern-non-modern division becomes non-central.

He breaks up the substance of identity and distributes it between the two protagonists, the saint Sadananda and his discipline Mahes

Chaudhury. Two other characters, Bipin, the manager of Sadananda's *asram*, and Madhurilata, a fugitive woman, act as go betweens in the exchange he lays out. It wouldn't be inappropriate to think that an enigma of contemporary politics is re-ordered as a theoretical puzzle in this design. Sadananda's *asram* and its mission of welfare, his message of love, non-violence and spiritual deliverance — how much of this is true and how much not, which is the mask and which one the real man — such questions find no answer as we get on with the investigation. After one has spent some labour trying to know who Sadananda is, one discovers that the answer was being sought in the wrong place, one has looking at Sadananda, but should have looked at Mahes Chaudhury. Similarly, one should put the question of Mahes identity to the figure of Sadananda. It is revealing to find how much the gaze into the psyche is actually blocked in *Ahimsa* (and in the novels that follow). In fact, this blocking has a narrative function in the novel, whenever there is an impediment in the way of psychological probing the story takes a further turn. As this technique was extended, Manik's work in the 40s seemed to be slackening in form, losing cohesion. The absence of a central consciousness contributes to this sense of incoherence. There is no narrative authority from which one can learn the truth of the characters.

Sadananda does not went Mahes as a disciple. Mahes, the devout and simple man from the village, takes this very refusal as the test of his devotion. Through spectacular penance, he gains his first entry into the *asram*. Not long afterwards, Sadananda is forced to seek shelter in Mahes's house, his animal attraction to Madhurilata having brought about a crisis in the *asram*. The rest is a narrative of the gradual surrender of Sadananda's personality to Mahes, who tells him in the face of his most abject protestations that the saint does not yet know he is a great man. An interwining story of *bhakti*, eros and mayhem is set in motion as the devotee seems to overcome the icon, and as the woman, Madhurilata, becomes the centre of a play of desire between Sadananda, Bipin and Bibhuti. Mahes marries her off to his own son Bibhuti, ostensibly to save the holy man's reputation. Soon afterwards, Sadananda breaks down and prays to him for freedom. Mahes has visibly imprisoned him in his faith. The saint goes back to the *asram* and earns new trust from Bipin, who thinks it must be the

greatness of his aims that is making him fail. Madhurilata, on the other hand, smarts from the assaults of Sadananda, and tries to punish him through means that seem to fulfil her tormentor's designs.

As the traffic of the gossamer *mahatma* between Sadananda and Mahes reaches a painful state of uncertainty, Bibhuti's story erupts into the frame. If Bipin and Madhurilata function as currency in the exchange between Sadananda and Mahes, he functions as the surplus. He is a political prisoner on parole, and has been reacting against his father's devotional sentiments from the beginning. A band of villagers create a hero of him, and a minor act of bravado leads to a chain of violence as inexplicable as it is spontaneous. The villagers go on a rampage at a religious gathering of their rivals at the *asram*; a gruesome riot follows that leaves Bibhuti and a few others dead. The wounded, bereaved Mahes does not defend himself in the court when Sadananda and Bipin frame him for the massacre. Soon afterwards, Bipin surrenders to him. The noble purpose of the *asram* is all destroyed, he confesses to him, and wonders if they could have someone like Mahes to revive it. Mahes says to him with his usual calm that he has already decided to take charge of the asram. And he has decided that Sadananda and Madhurilata should be despatched together soon. After the two leave by a boat, Mahes proposes they build up the *asram* from scratch.

The purpose of this longish synopsis is to give some idea about a narrative (without doing much justice to its intricacies) where there is no point from where the truth about the characters can be known. At every turn there is an unexpected utterance or action from the characters, but one that seems to reveal a truth that the reader would have known if s/he did not expect the consistency of either morality or desire from the individual, and if s/he did not try to place trust in any omniscient narration. The decision to pack off Sadananda and Madhurilata together, for example, is something that establishes a truth only after its utterance, and retrospectively revises our reading of their relationship as well as our knowledge of Mahes's knowledge. So long as we concentrate on the psychology of Sadananda or Mahes we will not find the real plot of *Ahimsa*. There is no 'excessive psychology', there is rather a barrier to such probing. To understand what comes to

the fore as a result of this method we need a concept of the subject as different from ego/self/consciousness. The plot of subject formation in *Ahimsa* is a plot of exchange; identity is a substance that changes hands in the novel, it is not be found in sovereign individuals. Sadananda and Mahes stand in front of each other like mirrors, creating endless reflections. But this exchange will have a surplus, or some senseless thing that wouldn't enter the exchange process in the first place. The violence that breaks out around Bibhuti points to its existence.

There is no reliable consciousness in the novel, but there is a peculiar interpolation. A few passages are presented within third brackets as 'comments of the author'. One such comment clearly states the logic, it says how "personality is always dependent on the other, in the development of personality one has to observe the rules of the other."

> I am saying all this with a purpose. I want to tell you straightaway about a basic resemblance between the personalities of Sadananda and Mahes Chaudhury. ... By bringing the two close to each other, and by putting an intermediary between them it would be easy to show the difference between personality as conscious intellection in one and as unconscious intellection in the other, but not the points of resemblance. Anyway, without more analysis, let me state a simple fact. There is no fundamental difference between the unconscious powers in Mahes Chaudhury that evoke love and the conscious powers in Sadananda that evoke awe. [17]

This plot will be repeated in the novels that follow; a stage is created for the theatre of the subject. In *Catuṣkon* (*Four Corners*, 1942), the four corners of the hero's room become a map of sorts. The four women in his life appear as mirrors to the psychologically impenetrable protagonist. They not only reflect his fantasies, but also his indifference; there are blank reflections. If we look for a story of feelings or desire we would miss the fact that the hero is a sort of nascent identity trapped within a set of transactions. The function of structure is clearly indicated in one of the central events : out of 'scientific curiosity' he requests two of these women to show him their naked bodies. He seeks his own reflection in this vision, but with one of them an accident occurs, her inexplicable lapse into insanity can be explained in reverse terms, she reveals the hero's own madness. The titles *Pratibimba* (Reflection)

or *Darpan* (Mirror) may point to the social realist promise of the novels, but there is enough reason to think the connotation is not only that of mirroring of society, that mirroring has other functions too. *Pratibimba* (1943) is considered transitional in the Freud to Marx journey in Manik's career. The hero, a proto-political being from a small town, is taken through a series of encounters in Calcutta. The social group he represents is left relatively undefined, the political identity he is searching for is broken up in fragments and laid out before him as he comes in contact with the revolutionaries living in a commune in the city. As an observer of reality he would perform an old narrative function, but this analytical ordering is the new political turn in Manik's work.

As we come to *Darpan* (1945) it becomes clear that this new project negates discontinuity between the Freudian and Marxist phases. This story of class struggle should have been told from the vantage point of the politically most advanced protagonist in the novel, Krishnendu. But there is no hero in the first place. Manik lays out the formation of a consciousness in a scheme of connections between characters - two sets of them this time instead of one. The limits of sociological description are constantly underlined, and the events always surpass the political naming the revolutionary activists provide them. In the last incontrollable violence that takes place in the village where the urban activists congregate, the 'excess' is figured again. The novel ends with a hint that the politics of liberation has to make sense of this overspill, this remnant of the social imaginary. At one point the author indicates that it is 'India' that one has to make sense of so far as it remains intractable and resists analysis.

The formal dissonances reach a new pitch in Cintamani (1946), a novel almost comic in its depiction of the War and the Bengal Famine. Characters disappear in the middle of the story as also threads of the narrative, making prominent the conscious process of interruption and ellipsis that Manik would introduce into the realist style that he was supposed to have brought to a climax in Bengali literature. [18] At a step ahead, dispersal itself occupies the centre of narration in *Cinha* (1947), the novel that marks a culmination of the process we are trying to trace. In the preface to the book the author tells us that he has written it in a new technique and does not know if it could be called a novel at all. It is about a single historical day and event — the Rashid Day

(February 12, 1946), demonstrations on the streets of Calcutta.[19] Between November 1945 and July 1946, the turbulence of the 40s reached its climax, waves of protest surged towards Calcutta and Bombay, peasant struggles began to change the face of the countryside, rebellion reached even the army and police barracks. The actions of the novel are directed towards the centre of the city where the multitude is making an intervention in history. The narrative draws back from there and gives us fragments of histories of the individuals — Osman, Abdul, Akshay, Hemanta, Sita, Amrita, Rasul, Rani, Ajoy. They are all pulled inexorably towards the stage set up in Dharmatala, Laldighi (the centre of business and administration in Calcutta). Time is frozen in the present and thus becomes spatialized, geometric. The shorter narratives coverage at the centre of this geometry, in the eye of the storm, where everyone is enjoined to renounce individual biographies. The author is no longer interested in the chronological relation between experience and character, he has been making the space between characters autonomous in the earlier texts, in *Cinha* he institutes an explosion of history in that clearing. Such explosions are excesses in relation to the linear mode of history. It is no surprise then that he would come to use elements of the montage techniques an extension of his realist style.

## THE SUBJECT BETWEEN MARX AND FREUD

To understand why the most important novelist of the time, moving from a 'Freudian' to a Marxist orientation, engaged himself with the investigation of the character in this manner one can look at the theory of the subject proposed by a Freudian from a structural perspective. We are thinking of Jacques Lacan here, a meeting with whom may not be accidental on the way from Freud to Marx; there already exists a strong tradition of such thinking. When one tries to understand Freud in terms of ego psychology the model that takes hold of our imagination is that of the individual mind and the unconscious hidden beneath. Lacan extended Freud's Copernican Revolution to its radical culmination. In his scheme the unconscious is the dimension of the other, of the absent, it is the 'discourse of the other', he said; if it exists, it is there outside the 'I', not

underneath, not lying in its secret recesses. The distinction between ego and subject then becomes crucial for him. In the subject the dialectic of I and non-I, presence and absence, is never resolved, in consciousness it is. The story of the subject has a structural/philosophical status in his work; hence it has a universal reach. Structures, precisely because they are historically defined become universalizable. If historicity and universality cancel each other out at every level there is no way one can use concepts.

The domain of identity, where I can call myself 'I' — 'I think therefore I am' — is called the Imaginary by Lacan. In the world of language or human exchange being and its name, 'I', cannot occupy the same place. The name has a position between us and it pre-exists us, we do not create this world of signs. In this order — called the Symbolic — self is a always marked by the other. In the first phase, Lacan conceived this as a process of inter-subjectivity. From the XIth Seminar onwards, he dropped the term as it still pointed to a relation between two autonomous entities. [20] From this point on, the third register of the subject, the Real, becomes important in his thought. Something will always slip through the net of exchange, otherwise one wouldn't have to move perpetually from signifier to signifier. Secondly, the moment we enter the world of language we leave a part of ourselves behind. This is the second separation that Lacan now formulates [21]. One could even say that as we enter the domain of life we are separated from the non-living within us, from the pure matter. Hence there will be both a void and a surplus in human exchange. Life will encompass death, the human will contain the non-human within a single entity. This is how the Real can be described.

With the help of such notions one can try to make sense of Manik's insistent plot of the 1940s. The surplus explodes as absurd violence in *Ahimsa*, and this model is followed till *Darpan*. But there is a new will signalled in *Darpan*, it ends with the indication that one has to make sense of the excess, the last violence in the village, before one can fashion a political account of reality. In *Cinha* the Symbolic is thrown into total disarray by the eruption of the Real. [22] The explosion in *Cinha* does not fall into the continuity of history, though it is the history from 1941 to 1946 that prompted Manik to move towards a more political understanding of the crisis of the self. The explosion has the dimension of event, not of development.

The history of the 'unfinished revolution' that the 40s heralded has hardly been written. [23] That these revolts were transgressing the limits of nationalist politics was vindicated by the repeated treachery of the nationalist leadership during the period. (The Congress and Muslim League leadership would often endorse the bloody suppression of the revolts by the British.) As students, workers and the Navy ratings carried the flags of these nationalist parties along with Communist Party banners to the barricades, the middle level leadership sometimes was carried away into solidarity, but the national leaders made no bones that they shared with the colonial rulers the dread of a popular socialist revolution. With the February revolts sparking off the mutiny in the Royal Navy the ruling powers, both present and the incipient, had marked out the common source of dread. Mass killings by the army, and then the communal riots in August, 1946, served to stem the tide, dividing the masses who were leading the parties, and turn them back into targets of policies like the Partition.

Within days of the institution of the independent nation-state the wave of strikes and processions came back. The limitation of the contemporary communist politics in assessing the reality has been widely commented on, Manik himself voiced this criticism. [24] The surge of popular revolts that came in the period between the August Movement (1942) and the communal riots (1946-47) was bound to exceed the categorical limits of party programmes. But on the other hand, for Manik and his contemporaries Marxism could recognize this moment of radical change as part of a worldwide project of human emancipation, as essentially modern. To think of this project one has to primarily think of a theatre of history where the characters can come on the stage only after they have shed the normative definitions of the self and of all its incomplete versions. The point is not to claim that all those who come on the stage are similar, or will have the same consciousness; universality cannot be posited at that level. It is the stage which has a universalizable dimension. The plot of the subject in formation could capture this 'clearing' for Manik. [25]

[ The essay was written for presentation at a seminar commensurating the centenary of Jacques Lacan organized by the Department of English, Jadavpur University, in December, 2001. ]

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Criticism of this tendency has come from Indian philosophers like Bimal Krishna Matilal, Daya Krishna and Jitendra Nath Mohanty.
2. See Bhattacharya, 'The Notion of Subjectivity', *Subject as Freedom* (Calcutta: Town Art Press 1930).
3. Arindam Chakravarty cited in Nirmalangshu Mukherji, 'Academic Philosophy in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, March 9, 2002.
4. 'Is there an Indian way of thinking? An informal essay', McKim Marriott ed., *India through Hindu Categories* (New Delhi: Sage 1990)
5. Kakar, *Inner World, A Psycho-Analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978), 104-12.
6. See, for example, Alfred Collins and Prakash Desai, 'Selfhood in the Indian Context: A Psychoanalytic Perspective', and B. K. Ramanujan, 'Dhannaram's Depression: Psychotherapy with an Indian Villager', T. G. Vaidyanathan and Jeffrey Kripal, ed., *Vishnu on Freud's Desk, A Reader in Psychoanalysis and Hinduism*. (Delhi: Oxford University 1990). Alan Ronald reaches similar conclusions in his work on Indians in the United States; see Ronald, *In Search of Self in India and Japan, Toward a Cross-Cultural Psychology* (Princeton: Priceton University Press, 1998.)
7. See Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy, Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1983). This theme informs most of Nandy's subsequent essays.
8. The essay is compiled in Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins and Steven Lukes, ed., *The Category of Person, Anthropology, Philosophy, History* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
9. Ronald Inden and McKim Marriott, 'Toward an Ethnosociology of South Asian Caste System', Kenneth David, ed., *The New Wind: Changing Identities in South Asia* (The Hague and Paris : Mutton, 1977).
10. Gananath Obeyesekere, 'The Illusory Pursuit of Self', *Philosophy East and West*, 40: 2, 1990.
11. Chakravarty, *Provincializing Europe, Post-colonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2000).
12. Fedric Jameson has recently criticized cultural theory based on 'difference' by stressing the interdependence of universality and difference; see his 'Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue', Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi, ed., *Cultures of Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press 1998), 75-76. For an ambitious critique of postcolonial theory in terms of a political distinction between 'singularity' and 'specificity' see Peter Hallward, *Absolutely Post-colonial, Writing between the Singular*

*and the Specific* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press 2001), 1-61.

13. The puzzlement that the writing of the period created for his critics is apparent from the contradictory reasons they have given for what they thought to be the crisis. For some it was the 'excessive' engagement with psychology; see Narayan Chaudhury, 'Shilpi Manik Bandyopadhyay' (1956), compiled in Ranjankumar Das, ed. *Sanibarer Chithi, Prabandha Samkalan* (Calcutta: Nath Publishing 1997). In this widely read commentary on Bengali novels, Saroj Bandyopadhyay talks about Manik's obsession with the psyche, see his 'Manik Bandyopadhya', Bangla Upanyase Kalanatar (Calcutta: Dey's Publishing 1980). Whereas Saroj Bandyopadhyay thinks the later novels suffer artistically because they try to portray the individual purely defined by intelligence, Buddhadeva Bose, an influential modernist critic, found the political novels of Manik suffering from 'airless one-dimensional realism' (cited in Malini Bhattacharya, 'Itikathar Pare: Manik Bandyopadhyayer Natun Parjayer Upanyas', Jalarka, *Freud theke Marx*, Special Issue, Calcutta, 1990)
14. The editors of the recent ten volume collected writing, *Manik Bandyopadhyay Racanasamagra*, (Calcutta: Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi). 1999-2002, have followed the same classification; see 'Grantha Paricay", in Vol. 3
15. See the introduction to the novel, 'Grantha Paricay', in *Manik Bandyopadhyay Racanasamagra* Vol. 3.
16. Gandhi's strategic adoption of the non-modern in his practices, including the fashioning of the self, has been much talked about. Ashish Nandy has gone into the question with some consistency; see his *Intimate Enemy*, and 'From Outside the Imperium', *Traditions Tyranny and Utopia, Essays in the Politics of Awareness* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 1987). His reality became an enigma in his own lifetime - how far one should believe what he said, and how he managed to do what he did? There was a great mythical investment in his figure from early on, one of the many effects of which was the emergency of many local Gandhis, leaders who would be called the Gandhi of this or that region, and who would probably embody his truth more consistently than he himself did. There was also speculation about his gender identity among both detractors and followers, on which a recent commentary can be found in Vinay Lal, 'Nakedness, Non-Violence and the Negation of Negation: Gandhi's Experiments in Brahmacharya and Celebate Sexuality', *South Asia*, XXII: 2, 1999.
17. All references are from *Manik Bandyopadhyay Racanasamagra*.
18. For a discussion of the realism of the later novels see Malini Bhattacharya, 'Itikatha o Porer Katha : Manik Bandyopadhyayer Bastabbadi Shaili',

*Akademi Patrika* 13, 2001; and Mihir Bhattacharya, 'Realism and the Syntax of Difference: Narratives of the Bengal Famine', K. N. Panikkar, Terence J. Byers and Utsa Patnaik, ed., *The Making of History: Essays Presented to Irfan Habib* (Delhi: Tulika, 2000).

19. Street protests and barricades showing remarkable solidarity among Hindus and Muslims and among the urban workers and students took an explosive turn around the trials of the members of the Indian National Army. On the Rashid Day, it reached a climax. Sumit Sarkar writes, "21-23 November...set a pattern of periodic upheavals in that city which went on for a decade and are reminiscent in some ways of the famous *journees* or 'days' of Paris during the French Revolution', *Modern India 1885-1947* (Madras: MacMillan 1983), 421. For a vivid chronicle of the days see Amalendu Sengupta, *Uttal Challish, Asamapta Biplab* (Calcutta: Pearl Publishers 1989). Sengupta writes about the urban poor taking to the streets: "Millions of people came out on the streets and rent the air with their slogans. People from the slums of Kolutola, Kalabagan, Patwarbagan, Eliot Road, Garcha, Rambagan, Mohanbagan, Narkeldanga, Kankurgacchi, Gas Street have poured into the open, their curses and profanities flowing freely. They are cursing the forefathers of the criminal government to damnation in their native obscene lexicon. They were fighting, their corpses were filling up the mortuaries, the list of nameless martyrs was getting longer". *Op.cit.*, 56. In Cinha, Manik develops the motif of the restructuring of the middle-class self, or what we referred to as the loss of individual biographies, through a mixing of lives and deaths across class barriers.
20. The XIth seminar, given in 1964, is translated as *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. Ed., Jacques-Alain Miller. Introduction by David Macey (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 1994).
21. See Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject, Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995), 35-79; and Paul Verhaeghe, 'Causation and Destitution of a Pre-ontological Non-entity: On the Lacanian Subject', Dany Nobus, ed., *Key Concepts in Lacanian Psychoanalysis* (London: 1998 Rebus Press), 164-89.
22. Slavoj Zizek has characterized radical freedom in these terms, see his 'Spectre of Ideology', Slavoj Ziziek, ed., *Mapping Ideology* (London: Verso 1994), 20-28.
23. Amalendu Sengupta calls his chronicle of the decade *Uttal Callis, Asamapta Biplab* (The tumultuous 40s, unfinished revolution; cited above). Sengupta thinks Manik refers to the happenings of November 25, 1945, in *Cinha*. Gautam Chattopadhyay, a historian and a participant in the street actions

of the time as a student leader, has written a powerful account of February 1946, using the expression 'almost revolution'. He thinks the novel, like Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay's *Jharoo Jharapata*, relates the Rashid Day events; see his 'The Almost Revolution, A Case Study of India February 1946' in *Essays in Honour of Prof. S. C. Sarkar* (Calcutta: People's Publishing House 1976), 438.

24. See, for example, his comments on the Communist debacle in Andhra in the entry 5.3.55 in his diary, *Aprakasita Manik Bandyopadhyay*, edited annotated and introduced by Jugantar Chakraborty (Calcutta: Dey's Publishing 1990), 233-34.
25. There is a line of radical political thinkers who have worked with the Lacanian notion of the subject. Louis Althusser was the first important figure in the tradition. He wrote one of the earliest and most important theoretical appraisals of Lacan in his 'Freud and Lacan' (1964), revised in 1969); his essay on the 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses, Notes towards as Investigation' (1969, Postscript 1970) works with a notion of the subject borrowed from Lacan. In recent times, Slavoj Zizek has tried to launch a critique of cultural studies and the politics of locality and difference by combining Lacanian thought and Marxism; among his numerous writing see 'Multiculturalism, or, The Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism', *New Left Review*, No. 225, 1997; and 'Lacan between Cultural Studies and Cognitivisim', *Umbr(a)*, issue on 'Science and Truth', 2000. His recent treatment of the notion of the subject is to be found most clearly in *The Ticklish Subject, The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London : Verso 1999). The work of Alain Badiou could perhaps provide an opening into the dimension of event that we are thinking of in relation to the subject in Manik. See his *Ethics: As Essay on the Understanding of Evil* (London : Verso 2001). Translated and introduced by Peter Hallward; and 'On a Finally Objectless Subject', Eduardo Cadava et al, ed., *Who Comes After the Subject?* (New York and London: Routledge 1999). Badiou has raised some important objections to the ethics of difference. Difference, Badiou says, is what we are. It is the level of multiplicity and he calls it the 'situation'; we live in difference. His startling proposition is that the ontology of the 'situation' can be presented in terms of set theory, it is mathematics. There is always a zero in this series, an absence. The event appears through the zero. The language of the situation does not have the means to understand the event, it is always revolutionary, whether in love, science, art or politics. The event launches what in plural Badiou calls 'truths'. It is in relation to a truth that the subject comes into being. It is not possible to construct ethics of politics from the point of view of the subject marked by multiplicity and difference,

he claims. As the subject gets implicated in the event or 'truth', becomes committed to and is called forth by specific truths, it moves towards what he calls its dimension of immortality. Ethics is possible only in the interest of this transformation; the ethics of what there is in the ethics of the status quo.

*Ipshita Chanda*

# "PHIR BHI DIL HAI HINDUSTANI": TRANSLATION IN THE TIME OF 'POSTCOLONIALITY'

> "It was his first encounter with the Ondo dialect. He wondered how many mental dictionaries one would have to have in this place, to cope with Brown's nasal dialect, Ezeba's bombast, Yanju's outlandish accent."
>
> Wole Soyinka, *Ibadan*, p. 106.
>
> "Not Ayodhyaji, contemporary Jiraniya. In *Ramcharitmanas*, the name is written as "Jirnaranya", If you can't read it, yourself, get Misirji to read it for you."
>
> Satinath Bhaduri, *Dhodai Carit Manas*, p. 1

Within the space demarcated by these two texts lie the realities of the 'post'colonial condition — it is not only between two (or more) languages that we live, but also between the written and spoken versions of these languages, between literacy and scriptless cultures, between books written and books spoken. And our "mental dictionaries" must necessarily be myriad, for we speak, think and live in more than one form of more than one language; sometimes even that so-called "one" language is just that, *i.e.*, "so-called". And so, negotiating this condition is impossible without the ability of and the mentality for translation. It is this process of negotiation of our everyday life through translation that I want to explore in what follows. Let me say, at the outset that this is perhaps not the common or obvious perception of translation among readers of books or even among academic practitioners of single literature ("one language — one literature"?) disciplines. But this common and obvious perception of translation, along with the ideas of "literature" and "language" that it is connected to, deeply contradict our daily lived reality. I shall attempt then, to reorientate these notions so that they more closely synchronise with that lived reality.

*Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature*, Volume XXXX, 2002-2003.

To begin with, let us briefly reflect on the implications of coloniality and language use. On the one hand, there is the imposition of the other's language on the colonised. On the other hand, there is also the learning of the other's language for the purpose of governance. But in both cases, can it be the same language that the other speaks. As Kaiser Cooke (1995) points out, "The labels affixed to concepts represents those elements of expression of the world which the speech or cultural community in question regarded as worth commenting about ... they embody culturally relative knowledge. This knowledge is always domain specific ... related to a specific domain of experience." Literature offers us innumerable examples when this necessary, almost forced, translation activity leads to hilarious or disastrous consequences. All of us "post" colonials, born and brought up in more than one language, have enough examples of our own, to illustrate this reality. However, I will refer to just one instance : the different translations of the concept "communism" by different Francophone African communities, one of which translated it as "devil's train" and the other as "world happiness." [1]

This means, then, that the acquisition of the other's language, for whatever use, is itself a process of continuous, even if unconscious, translation into the terms of one's experience. Bakhtin (1986) implies this when he criticises the "scientific fiction" of "graphic-schematic depictions" common in linguistic studies, and suggests instead that "Any understanding of live speech, a live utterance, is inherently responsive, although the degree of this activity varies extremely" (*ibid*, p. 68). This means that the ideas of "speaker" and "listener", the active and the passive sides of a communication chain are "fictions" to Bakhtin, for as he asserts, "Sooner or later, what is heard and actively understood will find its response in subsequent speech or behaviour of the listener" (*ibid*, p. 69). Historically, the colonised and the coloniser have been bound together by the fact of language. And this language, from the point of acquisition to the point of rejection, has been a translated medium, a medium unique to a specific cultural domain, transported for a particular use into another cultural milieu. But as we all know, how the other's milieu uses and profits from (an)other's language can barely be controlled by the civilising teachers themselves — it begins with petty clerkdom and can end with Pulitzers and Bookers. The implications of the latter bear much serious investigation — for instance, can we

see in these cases what Venuti (1994) calls "foreignising of local languages" a process in which the writer (translator) is "aware of imposing foreign or universal values upon local culture," even while "breaking the conventions of the target language"? Expressing the norms and values of one cultural milieu in a language structured to reflect those of a completely different one can be best understood by understanding the process of translation itself — and that is a process which societies involved on either side in the colonial episode of history must live with. Even when we are talking of a "single" literature, written in a "single" language, to which we now turn.

Perhaps the main question here ought to be, 'what is a 'single' ' literature — first of all, what is it's language? But let us, instead of asking the question at the outset, attempt to explore the conditions for answering it. The singularity, or more appropriately, the singleness, of a language is suspect at best, especially in a situation of a cultural contact, when different milieux and different expressions of these milieux are in constant interaction. It would be difficult to weed out words from "one" language if they invaded "another" language and lodged themselves so firmly there that they gain independent specificity in the "target" language. An extreme example of this can be cited in Mahasweta Devi's work — in "Draupadi", for instance, the Adivasi woman's encounter with English officials occurs in the form of violent police action during the Naxalite uprising of the late sixties and early seventies. The words that lodge themselves in her unconsciousness, the words that she automatically uses, are "target", "apprehended", "search and destroy", "veteran fighter", "counter", "comrade". The translator (*Spivak*, 1988) asks here : "What is it to use a language correctly without knowing it?" We might answer that it is the condition of translatability, the colonial condition. There is certainly, in such a condition, a hierarchisation of language and a fierce battle to get to the top of that hierarchy, but the 'single, "national" language, to quote Clifford (1988) is a "fiction' with the explicit function of "taming heteroglossia" (p. 181). Translation, and indeed language itself, needs to be thought of within the contexts of both heteroglossia and heterologia. Not, of course, that these issues have recently come to birth — but their existence demands to be taken cognizance of now in the face of globalisation on the one hand and fundamentalism on the other. The two quotations at the head of this

paper emphasize both the inter-linguistic as well as intralinguistic processes of translation that must constantly occur within a 'post' colonial society in order for daily life to be lived.

To consider this process of simultaneous translation, then, let us turn to a text which, both thematically and formally hinges on this process itself. Satinath Bhaduri's *Dhoḍāi Carit Mānas* [3], written around the life of the poor untouchable Tatma, Dhorai, who is initiated into the Gandhian nationalist movement, and turns into a soldier of independence even while he lives his life an abandoned changeling, adopted by an itinerant holy man. He goes on to establish himself in his community, loving, losing, fleeing and finally settling down as householder. The joys and tragic coincidences connected to land, possessions, women, respect, patriotism cross-hatched with the intricate customs and usages of caste/neighborhood/ class, so common in all lives that they may be seen as mundane, are nevertheless presented by the author in the form of one of the most popular *"carits"* of one of the most popular Indian heroes, Tulsidas' *Rāmcaritmanas.* The process of translation begins from this naming itself. The *carit* tradition forms a generic threshold of execution for the author and demarcates a horizon of expectation for the reader, which is fully exploited to write the life of the lowest of the low. I have considered elsewhere [4] the generic translation of the *Carit*, originally a vehicle for writing the life of an *avatāra* or a *purusottama*, into a vehicle for writing the life of a commoner, perhaps the true *avatāra* in a newly independent democratic republic. Here, I shall focus more on cultural and linguistic transaction from the written "literate" word, *i.e.*, 'the text of Tulsidas' *mānas* on the one hand, and the Gandhian ideology of self-help and swaraj on the other, to the oral world of Dhoḍai. Despite being illiterate, Dhoḍai translates the concepts of "Satyāgraha", "elections" and "resistance" into living, active reality as easily as he and his compatriots can translate the idiom of Tulsidas' life of Ram, which they have never been able to read, into their own life - situations.

The people who inhabit this text belong to the depressed classes — their problems are centered on earning enough to survive, and fulfill basic needs, physical and emotional. The Sanskritised culture within which they are marginalised exists in the text through the titles of each chapter, and different sections, which are in the almost - unused, "Sādhu" register of Bangla, and reflect the divisions of Tulsidas who

calls each section "Kāṇḍ", i.e. an important, even unusual event. Here, the elevated language and its ornate use stand as signposts to the events in Dhoḍai's life — events that seem trival, taken-for-granted to the middle class reader, but in the world of Dhoḍai, are momentous, as important as the supernatural aura of divinity that marks out all the actions of Tulsidas's Ram and elevates them to the status of the *kānd*. For instance take the "*Upākhyān* of Dhoḍai's Sartorial Acquisition" in the "*Bālkāṇḍ*". The *Upākhyān*, as the term suggests, is an auxiliary tale that contributes to the *Ākhyan* or descriptive narrative. All these generic divisions originate in various lists found in the Upanishads and the Rig Veda. This classically cited generic name is used as a narrative style to tell us how the naked Dhoḍai (whom his widowed mother Budhni is forced to abandon when she attracts as her new suitor the government driver Babulal) acquires a piece of cloth to cover himself. This is presented as an early sign of Dhoḍai's future greatness just as Ram's childhood "lila" is presented as the sign of later divinity by his devotee Tulsidas. Thus, the traces of Ram as a character, as well as the *Ramcaritmānas* as a text, resorate in the narrative of Dhoḍai's moral, emotional and even physical existence. The author marks this out at the very outset — when Budhni smuggles the two year old child to Baoka Baowa's *āddā* and despite her tears, leaves him there to go to her new suitor's house, the Baowa notices three lines just above Dhoḍai's belly button — "just as the *bālak* Ramchandraji had" (*ibid*, p. 14). In a footnote the author quotes Tulsi's lines from the "*Bālkānd*", describing the physical signs of difference that mark this unusual child destined for great things. Apart from the obvious inter-textuality that marks the text, the implications are indeed deeper — a written text permeates a scriptless community's life so completely that its lines come into their minds automatically in order to understand, elucidate or describe situations that they find themselves in. This text is translated into reality through its participations in a world where the word has no existence unless it is spoken — and this process from the written to the oral marks an intra-cultural translation that is crucial to the life of an idea in a society that consists of multilingual multicultural communities with differential access to the means of power acquisition. The efficacy of an idea in such a socio-linguistic context depends upon its openness to translation, its ability to preserve its force through such translations across

contexts and locations, in varying life situations. And Bhaduri demonstrates that the ideas that Gandhian nationalism brought into circulation as the strategy of anti-colonial struggle were just such ideas, able to survive and resonate in local contexts to knit these micro-localities into a national unity. Take, for instance the idea of the vote, crucial instrument of power in the hands of the hitherto disenfranchised. The efficacy of this weapon is translated into local idiom, in order to convey to the common voter the extent of the power that he can weild, thus explaining to him the importance of using his vote. The cornerstone of democracy i.e., the election, is translated into a specific life situation : the receipt of a letter, something that does not occur often and to everyone in Dhoḍāi's world. And when it does occur, it marks the subject of the situation as a person set apart from the run-of-the-mill commoner. The ballot papers are distributed in Koyeritola as letters from Mahatmaji — they have to be replied to, by being "posted" in the ballot boxes. How can anyone, illiterate though he be, refuse this personal communication from a leader who has been elevated to the status of god? Drawn to post his "letter", Dhoḍāi stands before the ballot box and thinks of the nationwide community so strongly forged by this process of translation :

> Through these letters so many people in one corner of the land are being able to reach Mahatmaji, in another corner altogether, at the same time Tatmatoli, Jirania, Bishkandha, mofussil - markets, Dhorai, Rampiyari, Pitho Santhal, Bolunteer, Talkumajhi, Mastersaheb — they all want the same thing ... They don't belong to the same caste community, yet how close they've come to one another. Just as Ramiya and his son are his own yet so distant from him, so these others are not related to him in any way and yet are so close to him. A fragile network like the delicate spider web, it breaks if you grasp it, it's so fine you can't make out whether it's there or not all the time... right across Ramji's territory his *avatar* Mahatmaji is weaving such a delicate web ... it does not eat into the flesh ... it remains only like the sour-sweet taste of the *aamloki* fruit ... a faint relish of a loved taste. (*Ibid.* p. 263.)

Dhoḍāi, like others of his class and community, is adept at translation of his kind because for him, it is an art of survival, both literally and qualitatively. But what of the reader of the text, and the writer himself? Clearly, a novel written in the professed shadow of a traditional genre

assumes its reader's acquaintance with the subtext, as closely as it depicts the character's acquaintance with it. The language Bhaduri uses is an example of heteroglossia and heterologia that reflect the reality in much of Indian society. There are at least four different registers which comprise to construct the narrative, and this means that there has to be continuous cultural translation across them by the reader too, if she is to experience the full effect of the narrative. This is more complicated, and from the technical point of view, more ambitious, than the simple use of a dialect in narration and/or conversation, in order to mark the regionality of a text — hence, the role of translation is crucial in its execution and reception. There is, as we have seen, the subtext, Tulsi's *Rāmcaritmānas* that contributes chapter and section divisions, underwrites the events in the protagonist's life and directly enters the narrative as quotation, comment, description, reference. But all these are oral, they are in the form of "utterances" as Bakhtin points out, rather than as "neutral ... language tools" (*ibid*, 84-85). In his view, "the neutral meaning of the word applied to a particular actual reality under particular real conditions of speech communication creates a spark of expression ... (expression) exists neither in the system of language nor in the objective reality surrounding us... The meaning of a word in itself (unrelated to actual reality) is ... out of the range of emotion" (*ibid*, 86-87).

In Bhaduri's text, a story is told in standard literary Bangla, which has come to birth as a mixture of all the influences that have moulded the language over centuries. Then, the narrator uses a Sanskritised "sādhu"[5] version of the language in appropriate places to further emphasize his deployment of the generic conventions usually employed for writing the life of a great man or even a reincarnation of god, for the purpose of writing the life of a poor untouchable. But this untouchable protagonist does not speak either the literary Bangla of the narrator, or its inflated version that the narrator is able to use at will. Rather, the protagonists speaks a dialect common in his homeland, areas east of the former course of the Kosi river lying by the *pakki* or metalled Kosi-Siliguri road, part of pre-Independence United Province, where the Congress had come to power. There is a debate on currently about standard "Hindi", but the Hindi that Dhoḍāi and his compatriots speak is a corruption of both Urdu and Sanskrit versions. They talk

of *tamāsā*, instead of the genteel Urdu inspired *tamasha*, *teohar* rather than the chaste Sanskrit *utsav* or even its more bourgeois equivalent, *tyohār*. Their dialect is in places translated into colloquial Bangla by Bhaduri, in places written in Bangla script with footnotes, and sometimes, placed within quotes as utterance. But in their speech we also find, as we have already noted, innumerable references to *Rāmcaritmānas*, a written text, here, in true Bakhtinian style, finding "spark(s) of expression" in actual reality. These occurrences further nuance the register of the dialect, represented as it is in Bangla for Bhaduri's Bengali reader. And last but not the least, there is the reality of contact with an alien culture that forms a new register altogether, a vocabulary consisting of the words of rule — *gormen*, *ropot*, *ballisteri*, *bhaichairman* (Vice-Chairman), *bolunteer* (volunteer); the words of resistance — *satiagira* (Satyagraha), *Ganhibaoa* (Gandhi baba) and words that denote a brush with modernity, with the world at large — *Japaoni* (Japanese), *Germanvalla* (belonging to the Germans). These are only a few of the words that introduce the shift in semiotic system — together, they form the rudiments of a new discourse that is slowly taking hold of the lives of Dhoḍāi and others like him, extending their mental and moral universe, adding to the sum of "knowledge". And they have to negotiate this new discourse in their daily transactions in order to be able to come to grips with the changing reality that it signals.

The intersemiotic and intralinguistic translations that are documented in this text traverse particularly complex routes, for, in a community that is illiterate, and unfamiliar with the ideas that the bourgeois English educated nationalist leaders are determined to struggle for, these new concepts have to be re-enunciated in a familiar milieu, within the terms of a familiar discourse, in order to become effective. To return to Bakhtin, once more,

> ...when we select words in the process of constructing an utterance, we by no means always take them from the system of language in their neutral, dictionary form. We usually take them from other utterances, and mainly from utterances that are kindred to ours in genre (*ibid*, 87).

This would explain Gandhi's successful inter-semiotic translation of the alien ideas of nation, citizenship, patriotism and duties through his

ability to use the traditional political concept of Ramrajya to weld the alien concepts into a politically meaningful discourse. Thus he could offer, at that point, an agenda for action to people like Dhoḍāi who lived in a world far removed from the one in which bourgeois 19th century nationalism was born. The excitement surrounding the Gandhian volunteers' program of *satyāgraha* at Bishkandha village is an example of this process of successful translation.

> Even Dhorai does not know what *Satiagira* means, but the word sounds familiar. The real pleasure in listening to a ghost story consists in the hair-standing-on-end feeling of fear. The same fear mingles with the mystery of *Satiagira* too : red-turbaned police, plough - bullocks impounded by authorities, eating the jail - *khichri, hakim,* who knows what other terrible things! With the curiosity that surrounds *satiagira,* is mingled the enchantment of Mahatmaji's name, as the satisfaction of walking twenty *kos* to pour water in the temple at Rishasringa mingles with the capers and laughter of the *tāmāsā* (pp. 286-87)

For Bakhitin, any word exists for a speaker in three aspects :

> as a neutral word in language, belonging to nobody; as an other's word which belongs to another person and is filled with echoes of the other's utterance; and finally as my word, for since as I am dealing with it in a particular situation with a particular speech plan, it is already imbued with my expression (*ibid*, p. 88).

This sounds like the philosophy of a 'post' colonial translation project. When the word exists in a dictionary, it is neutral, but that is not the same word that exists in what Soyinka calls a "mental dictionary", for to move from neutrality to the mind of a speaker is already to acquire a context, a colour, an expression. For those involved in colonial traffic, the "other's" word and "my" word are in constant interaction, benign or confrontationalist as that encounter may be. And existence in this condition entails translation between these words, a process constant and relentless. Dhorai's case is just an extreme example of this process, which is why I have cited it herein some detail.

But what about actual translation itself — how can one translate a text such as Bhaduri's which is an amalgam of many simultaneous translation processes and operates as we have seen, in four different

registers, and in at least three discernible languages? There are variations within these language — blocs that can be ascribed to caste, community, literacy and even occupation. When translating into a target language that belongs in this text to a world-view that is alien and being acted against, *i.e.*, the coloniser's world view, what strategy should the translator adopt? What is the nature of the "coloniser's language" that can accommodate the multilinguality which performs such important thematic and generic tasks in this narrative?

Walter Benjamin (1923) quotes Pannwitz as saying :

> ...our translators, even the best ones, proceed from a wrong premise. They want to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German instead of turning German into Hindi, Greek, English. Our translators have a far greater reverence for the usage of their own language than for the spirit of the foreign works.

Pannwitz's humble (almost pious?) perceptive self-effacement still smacks of 19th century romanticism that was the foundational impulse of German Indology and fuelled enough linguistic research and translation to become a fledgling discipline. Is there any need, today, to assume that the translator's "own" language can only be the coloniser's *i.e.*., that translation is necessarily a one way traffic beginning from the civilised Euro-seeker and directed towards the colonised other who may well be innocent and spiritually evolved, but still remains a part of unindustrialised, backward non-Europe? Indeed, for many of us today, the source and target language can both be described as the usage of "(our) own language". When I translate from Bangla into English, and vice versa, what are my priorities, where do I locate myself? The answer is not as obvious as it would seem, and an easy, obvious answer is the most suspect. Just to complicate matters some more — what happens when the same "I" translates from Oriya into Bangla, and vice versa? To even begin to answer these questions, indeed even to ask them, one needs to understand and accept the superfluity of rigid single literature boundaries yoked to the spurious homogeneity of single languages. There are relations of power involved here, but these relations are not always limited to the coloniser's language and the colonised's language. They may well extend to two languages unequally colonised, one more under the influence of "power culture" and "power knowledge", the other

further removed from centres of power and used more by communities be (leading) a predominantly rural life, less literarised, not fully bourgeoisfied. Every line of demarcation in community formation is characterised by varying language use, and if literature is the expression of individual and communal experiences, then it will necessarily follow these variations. Both "single" literature and "single" language either refuse or appropriate to the hegemonic standard, these internal pressures and conflicts. They use the same operation on other languages and literature — the very drawing of a boundary across which communication is possible only on the power language's own terms, implies this.

But of course, linguistic priorities are shaped by the politics of the milieu in which the language is used, by the world that forges the language as a tool to communicate its values and ideals. Our strength, in the 'post'colonial situation, is our facility for translation — we can without much effort, move between "mental dictionaries" and switch registers because we live between languages, cultures and semiotic systems. Thus we are uniquely placed with respect to what we first embraced and then shunned as the "coloniser's language". Our linguistic abilities, our translational existence and the politics of our location in the 'post'colonial world give us the opportunity to reshape the language that we have received, if only we can think of this language in Bakthin's terms as an enunciated/uttered socially viable language, populated as much with "our" reality as it is with the reality of the "other". If we can conceive of it as such and not as the holy grail whose purity is to be protected at all costs, we can use it for our purposes. A 'coloniser's language' thus can be actively made one's own — and this occurs only through translation, whether inter-semiotic or inter-linguistic or inter-cultural. In other words, I am suggesting the forging of an English/ French/Portuguese that belongs to the milieu in which it is spoken with strict adherence to the specificity of its culture. We cannot, anymore, think of these languages as "other" because they are part of our global reality. Does that mean it is time to abandon the local microreality in favour of the global macroreality in order not to lose out on the goodies of globalisation? Is that the agenda for translation theory and practice in the much hyped 21st century?

In fact, I am advocating just the opposite. Translation as practice, in its fluidity, in its ability to facilitate contact and communication,

provides perhaps the only means to resist the reduction of our felt realities to data on the worldwide web. Because, located as we are in more than one language - world and able to move between languages and cultures as part of daily existence, we posses the means to orientate power languages to reflect and express our different realities. This does not, for a moment imply that we are ourselves safe from being completely swallowed by the power language itself. The process of globalisation has the means and the reasons to translate all local, microrealities into its own idiom, cutting us off from our multilingual, specific locations which we then call "roots" and wander about looking for (mostly with grants from Universities located in the metropolis). Both the process of "losing" one's specific location, and the connecting of this location to the macroreality on our terms involve translation. Indeed, translation is the 'post'colonial's mode of existence and her weapon. Lest this sound too uncomfortably military, I may even use a politically - correct term and call translation our strategy of democratisation. If we have to make the power language - world we also inhabit, by virtue of being once colonised, "safe for serious negotiation" (Dasgupta 2000, 1408) then perhaps we may even be able to translate *Dhoḍāi Carit Mānas* into that very power language. Dasgupta implies a continuous back and forth process of ideas between the language worlds of English and other Indian languages, a traffic of ideas (not terms) which he calls "cognitive messages" (*ibid*, 1409) translated into the "locally usable" idioms. These "cognitive messages", borne in any particular language, "when recycled elsewhere (in another language) will come out as replicable generalisable mutatis mutandis" (1409). The sum of all such messages amendable to such cross - linguistic existence, he calls "knowledge". I contend that free access to and freedom to produce such knowledge is the only way we can participate on our own terms in macrorealities that impinge upon our lives, without getting overwhelmed by their vastness, and power to influence our daily existence almost by remote control. We refuse to enter the labyrinths of macrorealities at the risk of isolating ourselves completely; even the most basic form of control over our destinies and that of our communities will be forfeited if we choose to live in the illusion of splendid isolation — the relentless forces of globalisation need to be understood and confronted if they are to be negotiated.

Bednarski (1989) describes translation as speech act, a method more of finding a way of telling for the target reader than of transmission of an object. Naturally this "way of telling" depends on the location and politics of the teller, and influences directly the construction of the resulting discourse. The 'post'colonial translator can make the task of translation meaningful to her location only if she can use her ability for translation as a political weapon to break the closed circuits of global knowledge and power production in order to set up alternatives that emanate from her location. Translation itself is being used, in its crudest form, to invade these locations with the express purpose of homogenising them, all the better to "globalise" our most basic forms of existence. Witness Toon Tamāsā, now available at prime time on Cartoon Network in Hindi and Tamil. The vast Indian market of kids who speak English can only be added to by the supplementary market of those who don't. The market, of course, has no compunctions or ideological hang - ups about reinventing itself in the language of the other, because what it wants to perpetrate is not so much a language as a life-style and world view that the language expresses. And here, what is sought to be perpetrated is a particular style of childhood, an idea that is almost sacrilegious because it involves that precious human capacity for nostalgic pleasure. I cite this here only to indicate the power of translation — and its indispensability in our lives, at political, emotional and ethical levels.

Perhaps many of us remember the fifties film in which Raj Kapoor told us his shoes were Japanese, his trousers English, his red cap Russian, and yet, *"dil hai Hindustani"*. What was a satirical dig at a dependent satellite economy in the fifties is a mere statement of fact today in the era of massive economies of scale. As 'post'colonials, we are only too familiar with this existence. Our software may be developed by ABCDs or NRI's, our critical literature may be British or East European, our texts Caribbean — but despite this, we're located geographically and intellectually in a 'post'colony with its own priorities and concerns. We can't wish that away just as we can't wish away the dubious legacy of the colonial language. Rabid insistence on linguistic or cultural purity on either side of the divide can only lead to exclusions or submergence in the global "same". To understand the value of our multicultural identities, and to preserve them is the basis of our strategy for survival

— and translation on our own terms, as process and as practice, is a priority if that strategy is to be activated.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Pierre Alexandre "Problems of Modern Political Terminology in African Languages" in (ed) *The French Perspective in African Studies.*
2. Mahasweta Devi, "Draupadi" in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 1987, p. 179-196.
3. Satinath Bhaduri, *Dhoḍāi Carit Mānas* First published 1356 BS. (1949, Part-I) and 1372 BS (1965, Part-II). The edition used here 1388 (1979), Bengal Publishers, Calcutta. All references are to this edition; all translation are mine.
4. Ipshita Chanda 1994 "Notes Towards Tracing the Charit as a Genre" in *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature* ed. A. Dev.

## WORKS CITED

Bakhtin, Mikhail (1986), "The Problem of Speech Genres" in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. V. W. McGee, ed. C. Emerson & M. Holquist, of Texas Press, Austin, 60-102.

Bednarski, Betty (1989), *Autour De Ferron: Littérature, traduction, alterité*, GREF Toronto.

Benjamin, Walter (1923), "The Task of the Translator" in H. Arendt (ed.) 1969 *Illuminations Schocken*, New York.

Bhaduri, Satinath (1979), *Dhodai Carit Manas*, Bengal Publishers, Calcutta.

Clifford, James (1988), *The Predicament of Culture Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*, Harvard, Cambridge.

Dasgupta, Probal (2000), "Sanskrit, English and Dalits", *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 15-21, XXXV: 16, 1407-12.

Devi, Mahasweta, (1978), "Draupadi", trans. G. Chakravorty Spivak in Spivak, 1987.

Kaiser-Cooke, Michèle (1995), "Murder in the Laboratory. Termhood and the Culture Gap" in *Translation as Inter-Cultural Communication*, eds. M. Snell — Hornby et. al., Benjamin Translation Library, No. 20, John Benjamins, Amesterdam/Philadelphia/Prague.

Soyinka, Wole (1994), *Ibadan*, Methuen, London.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1987), *In Other Worlds: Essays in Culture and Politics*, Methuen, London, New York.

*Guru Charan Behera*

# THE FLOWER-OF-LOVE-IN-IDLENESS IN GIRISH KARNAD'S *HAYAVADANA*: A CULTURAL APPROPRIATION OF SHAKESPEARE

Towards the end of Act I in Girish Karnad's Hayavadana occurs the episode of the Fortunate Lady's flowers — Padmini is fascinated by the wondrous magic of the body as Kapila (a close friend of her husband Devadatta) skillfully and nimbly climbs up the tree and brings her the Fortunate Lady's flowers and as he hands over the flowers to her she feels the full flowering of her passion for him. This reminds us of the episodes of the flower-of-love-in-idleness in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* — the juice of the flower dropped in the eyes of Lysander and Demetrius move them to love Helena forgetting Hermia, they have wooed earlier and the same juice makes fairy queen Titania love ass-headed Bottom. It seems that the flower-of-love-in-idleness has been intertextually transferred and transformed into the Fortunate Lady's flowers with certain resonances of similarities and differences. It is to be noted here that neither in Somadeva's *Vetāla Pañcaviṁśati*, nor in Thomas Mann's interpretation of this story *The Transposed Heads*, on which *Hayavadana* is based, there is any mention of such type of flower, though there are numerous myths, folk tales and beliefs, both in East and West, about magical flowers and herbs, which Karnad like Shakespeare must have drawn upon. Shakespeare, no doubt, remains a metatext generating, influencing and in filtrating multiple other texts in various ways over the ages. And *Dream* being the first modern dramatic text dealing with the theme of metamorphosis so movingly and attractively might have been a model for Karnad's *Hayavadana* concerned with the same theme. This paper is an attempt to expand this link into a web of intertextual connexions between the two texts such as the fluidity of identity, the transposition of the head and the body, the coexistence of the supernatural, human and animal worlds, multiple plots, play-within-play structure etc. all integrated into an artifact and to map out the geographical and temporal distances covered up, in the process, by Shakespeare and to show the deployment of all this for the amplification of the marginalised voices suggested, sometimes projected by Shakespeare in his plays. This is

also to suggest that one productive approach to Shakespeare in Indian classrooms is to intertextually relate his texts to certain third world texts.

Intertextuality presupposes that the works of art are shaped out of earlier works, made possible by prior works which they take up, repeat, challenge and transform. To quote Michael Warton and Judith Still,

> Texts are shaped not by immanent time, but by the play of divergent temporalities. Texts are therefore not structures of presence but traces and tracings of otherness. (*Intertextuality:* 44).

The term intertextuality used by Julia Kristeva for the first time to denote the interrelationship between texts has two implications. First, the writer is a reader of texts before he is a creator of texts and therefore the work of art is inevitably inflected with references, quotations etc. Second, a texts is available only through some process of reading due to the cross-fertilization of the packaged textual material by all the texts which the reader brings to it, even his experience of some practice or theory unknown to the author. My strategy in the paper is to bring bot the axes together — texts entering via the author and texts entering via the reader, the reader as co-producer — the excavation of the traces of Shakespeare's *Dream* in Karnad's *Hayavadana* and my reading of the play in terms of *Dream* and other related texts and critical theories that correspond to this play.

Henry Louis Gates Jr' has interpreted intertextuality as literary ancestry involving three elements "texts that provide models of form, texts that provide models of substance and the text at hand" (*The Signifying Monkey* : 122). As a model of form and substance Shakespeare provides possibilities as well as constraints that are open to negation by succeeding generations. As Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* argues all great texts, masterpieces encode ~~the greatest~~ pressures and preoccupations, they successfully reveal and formalise prevailing structures of attitude and reference and, in so doing, indicate both the possibilities and limits of these structures. Said has further clarified this in his *The World, the Text and the Critic* that "For every poem or novel in the canon there is a social fact being requisitioned on the page, a human life engaged, a class suppressed or elevated" (1983, p. 23). Our post-colonial society is more aware of, rather radically sensitive to these questions of social inequality, and that become an important factor in our changing responses to Shakespeare.

The post-colonial study rejects the way Shakespeare has been used by critics and in Indian classrooms as a part of 'civilizing mission' purported to project the superiority of the white race under the mask of universal humanism. Gauri Viswanathan referring to English literature

study in India has pointed out that "humanistic functions associated with the study of literature — for example, the shaping of character or the development of aesthetic sense or the discipline of ethical thinking are also essential to the process of socio-political control", and the English Literary text "functioned as the surrogate Englishman in his highest and most perfect state" (*Oxford Literary Review*, 2 & 23). The post-colonial criticism deconstructs this universal humanist paradigm that tries to erase the questions of race, class, nation, gender that the post-colonial third world has been struggling with. This follows the recent Renaissance criticism like New Historicism which is beginning to address not just the coexistence but the interlocking of various structures of oppression - women, black people and other suppressed subjects that are constituted by and subvertive of authority. Following this argument *Hayavadana* can be seen as a critique on Shakespeare as well as an attempt at appropriating certain elements of *Dream* for carrying out the playwright's sociocultural agenda of the recovery and foregrounding of marginalized voices — the rural folk and women, the discourse of the body.

Karnad's engagement with western discourse and his own cultural roots can be understood from his explanation of his post-colonial situation:

> My generation was the first to come of age after Indian became independent of British rule. It therefore has to face a situation in which the tensions, implicit until this, had come out in the open and demanded to be resolved without apologia or self-justification, tension between the cultural pasts of the country and its colonial past, between the western mode of thought and our own tradition, and finally between the visions of future that opened up once the common course of political freedom was achieved.
>
> (*The Plays of Girish Karnad: Critical Perspectives*, 21)

In response to such a situation Badal Sircar has formulated his theory of "third theatre" — a theatre of synthesis that aims at a synthesis between Indian traditional theatre and the theatre following western style. Karnad's plays like *Hayavadana* and *Nagamandala* are instances of such synthesis, between folk forms like Yakshagana and western modes like those of Brecht, Pirandello and Artaud but they prioritise the folk and often give them subversive role against western hegemony and also against the elitism within anticolonial discourse. This is also intertextuality in practice in a broader sense. Intertextuality becomes more appropriate for *Hayavadana* as it is reworking of the riddle stories of Somadeva and Thomas Mann. In that sense the play is a cultural appropriation of Shakespeare's *Dream*, Mann's *The Transposed Heads* and our folk culture in an attempt to build up an indigenous theatre.

The flower-of-love-in-idleness in *Dream* suggests love as a fantastic force playing among the surroundings of men and nature infecting and influencing them like the enchanting moon, magical forest air. But the fortunate-Lady's flowers in *Hayavadana* are an objective correlative of the desires of Padmini and Kapila for each other and links up the inner mind with the outward landscape. Love-in-idleness is itself a tale of metamorphosis of a milk-white flower into a purple one brought out by Cupid's arrow and becomes instrumental in the figurative metamorphosis of characters Lysandev, Demetrius, Titanic that precedes but is separate from the literal metamorphosis that of Bottom. In case of the Fortunate-Lady the figurative metamorphosis leads to and is responsible for the literal metamorphosis. Both have ironical grotesque implications and both are implicated in the politics of domination and subversion. More particularly the story of Bottom's transformation into an ass-headed man and his being loved by the fairy queen Titania, it can be argued, appears, in different forms, as an intertext and interacts with other intertexts in *Hayavadana* that attempts to critique gender and caste distinctions in contemporary India.

The world of *Dream* is a feudal partriarchal world that sustains itself by subjugation and exclusion of the other — woman and common people like mechanicals. Theseus marries Amazonian queen Hippolyta after defeating her in the war. Oberon punishes Titania and puts her in a shameful situation for not conceding to his demand. Hermia has to face execution or eternal spinsterhood for refusing to marry the man of her father's choice. Theseus, the king makes a statement on what can be called a patriarchal theocracy:

> To you your father should be as a god,
> On that composed your beauties; yea, and one
> To whom you are but as a form in wax
> By whom imprinted, and within his power
> To leave the figure or disfigure it.

This is a partriarchy which has religious and legal sanction and is socially and legally enforceable. This structure has even been internalised by women, as Helena speaks to Demetrius, "I am your spaniel and Demetrius, / The more you beat me, I will fawn on you" (II. i). Hermia in the beginning revolts but is eventually brought back to the social fold without the patriarchal norms being disturbed. Even supernatural intervention is invoked in the play to maintain the order. Class distinction is more evident in the treatment of the lower-class people in the play. Of all the people in the forest Bottom, a weaver is chosen as an object of fairy

king Oberon's whim to play pranks upon. Oberon's putting ass-head on Bottom is an attempt by the dominant group to reduce the marginalised man to non-human, to a beast. Again it is symbolic of the stereotypification of common as simple, credulous and, above all, stupid. But Shakespeare has invested Bottom with such vitality and energy that he subverts the dominant and tears away the stereotypes, and, in this act ironically he is aided by the inherent instability and contradiction in the hegemonic order, particularly caused by the gender distinction within it, of which Oberon and Titania quarrel is one instance. Bottom's literal metamorphosis follows the figurative metamorphoses of Lysander, Demetrius and Titania and underlines the inconstancy of the lovers, aristocrats and supernaturals, and also his being loved by the fairy queen is itself subversive of the grand hegemonic order. Titania's romantic ardour is countered and subverted by Bottom's earthy inertness' of response. The play-within-play "Pyramus and Thisby" rehearsed and enacted by Bottom and his friends also becomes a model for Brenchtian and Pirandelian theatre forms which Karnad has made use of Bottom as the stage manager and director of the play can be identified with Bagabat of Yakshgana in *Hayavadana* and is thus brought from the periphery to the centre in the play.

Bottom the weaver, wooed by the fairy queen, is comparable to Kapila a blacksmith, wooed by Padmini in *Hayavadana*. Padmini is closer to Titania, because first, she is a paragon of beauty described by Devadatta as "magic lake"; second, she originally belongs to an intermediate caste baishya but later on through her marriage with a brahmin Devadatta has gone up the highest rung of the caste ladder and, third as her name signifies, she represents the Padmini type, categorised by Hindu Shastra as the finest type of woman, depicted as graceful, artful, virtuous and faithful. Initially in *Hayavadana* Padmini is given no chance by the present patriarchal controlled marriage system to choose her husband, she is instead chosen by Devadatta and wooed by Kapila on his friend's behalf. Her desire for Kapila, as he gives her the Fortunate-Lady flowers, sets her against patriarchally arranged matrimony and against the patriarchal construction of Padmini type intended to keep woman static, pigeonholed and subjugated. Kapila is earthly and realist like Bottom undermining the airy ideology of the supremacy of the head with the strong sense of the physical. He is a counter to Devadatta as Bottom is to the fairies, romantic lovers and feudal lords. That Bottom becomes a replacement for the Indian boy, for which Oberon and Titania quarrel, further like him to the other — a non-white and introduces and racial dimension to the conflict.

The other character closer to Bottom with ass-head is Hayavadana himself, the horse-headed man. In both the cases magic is involved. While in the case of the former the metamorphosis is wrought by external forces trying to fashion him according to their whim, in the case of the latter it is genetically inherited. The horse-man presents a tragic spectacle of incompleteness constantly plaguing him but Bottom has the comic genius and self-conceit to laugh with this abnormality. He has the imagination of a folk artist to reduce anything fantastic to material reality, to actively participate in the animalic in man. As he has said he can play Pyramus, Thisbey and Lion, he now plays an ass. So the talk of his metamorphosis shows his ability to confront the outward imposition by playing with it and interpreting it as per his comic genius and rustic wit. He turns it into his own game, and creates a pastime out of it.

The tales of metamorphosis in *Hayavadana* are quite appropriately framed by the myth of Lord Ganesh, who invoked in the beginning of the play, is a symbol of primal metamorphosis. It can be seen as a repudiation of humanism that always puts man above animal, the head above the body. Lord Ganesh is also an example of a complex dialectic of discursive erasure and cultural appropriation. Initially a prevedic folk deity Ganesh has become a part of mainstream religion. He becomes the ideal combination of man and animal, the head and the body that the characters in the play try to attain.

Hayavadana's mother was a princess married to a stallion. This has the distant echo of the fairy queen Titania's love for the ass-headed man Bottom. While the princess attempts to escape the patriarchal game of *svayambar*, Titania gets caught in the patriarchal game as mystifying as magic. This can also be read as an action resulting from her unconscious aversion for patriarchy. Almost similar motive operates in the choice of the princess for a stallion in the *svayambar*, what has been unconscious in the former becomes conscious in the latter. It was a kind of revolt against the convention of *svayambar*, which had become more a show of royal vanity and patriarchal power than an expression of genuine desire to give women freedom to choose, particularly when the choice was limited to only the royal personages, who had been selected and invited by the king-father but not open to all including commoners. This is a practice of exclusion through which the hegemonic order operates. And in *svayambar* the princes had to show their physical prowess to win the hands of the princess, thus, reducing the woman to an object of competition and conquest, a prize, as Hippolyta has become in *Dream*. Here the princess's preference for an animal is a subversive act against humanism which is here

identified with and constructed by patriarchy. Her instinctive perception of the extra-animalic in the animal was later on proved by the metamorphosis of the stallion into a gandharb, a divine being revealing the fact that he was cursed by Lord Kuber. When Gandharb, after being released from the curse, asked her to accompany him to the heaven she refused asking him to come back to his animalic form, for she perhaps suspected that to be another patriarchal design. Her ultimate preference for an animal life is symbolic of radical alienation as well as radical subversion. That could be the reason why Hayavadana becomes a complete horse, though he often declares his intention to be human.

Bottom and his friends take part in the celebration of the webbing of Theseus and Hippolyta which becomes a national celebration. Such celebrations are often aimed at glorifying monarchy and strengthening British nationalism and manufacturing the allegiance of the subjects through glamorisation and through glossing over of all contradictions, interests, groups and communities, Karnad has brought to the fore these groups and interests sought to be steam-rolled into totalitarian nationalism. This has been indicated at the beginning of *Hayavadana*, when the Yakshagana Actor reports that a horseheaded man scolded him for passing at the road side and warned him not to do such nuisance on the main road. Hayavadan, who, as he reports, has visited many places of pilgrimage, Benaras, Allahabad, Dwaraka etc. and has studied "the social life of Nations — Civics, Politics, Patriotism, Nationalism, Indianisation, the socialist pattern of society..." with the purpose of becoming completely human has perhaps been infected with high elitism that scorns folk manners (*The Modern Indian Drama*, 263). The words "Nation", "Civics", "Politics", "Patriotism", "Nationalism", "Indianisation" with capitals at the beginning suggest his being enamoured of totalitarian nationalism that ignores the community states and thereby distorts social polity. Bhagabat's advice to Hayavadana to visit Kali on Mount Chitrakoot in a jungle worshipped by the tribal folk is an assertion of the folk, the local as against the elite, the national. It implies that the involvement with the local cultural specificities can be the basis of true nationalism and self realization. But Hayavadana's complete metamorphosis into a horse is a severe indictment of humanism that has turned hypocritical and an instrument of control, an intellectual tool by the dominant group. It is a radical decentering that jostles us into an awareness of the illusory nature of human existence and of the soul, the spirit, the head, man considered to be the centre as fictions. It is a radical questioning of the metaphysics of presence, as in *Dream* Bottom

becomes a means of metaphysically undermining all the hegemonic mysticism — human and supernatural.

The supernatural character Kali in *Hayavadana* is as humanised as Oberon, Titania and Puck. She is as petulant and impatient as Oberon. Whenever she appears she yawns, looking for opportunity to lapse into sleep. Her impatience makes Padmini hasty and confusedly put one's head with another's body, and scares Hayavadana so much that he cannot completely express his wish and can only say "Make me complete" and can't say "complete man". She is responsible like Oberon and others for the tragi-comedy of error. Even then like Titania's underlying longing for the other it appears from the trajectory of Padmini's desire that she has willed this transposition and Kali is just in external manifestation of her diabolic unconscious. She is a yogini, as described by Bhagabat an embodiment of strong erotic power and imagination (*Modern Indian Drama*, 265). Through her intense participation with the vital forces of life she can transform man according to her desire. The mixing up of the limbs of Devadatta and Kapila is also a challenge to the notion of purity and pollution as an ideology for caste distinction and a denial of the hierarchical opposition between the head and the body. At the end they are back to their original selves, fight each other out for Padmini and Padmini goes for self-immolation and her son grows up in the jungle and then is restored to his grandfather, Devadatta's father. These two stories of Devadatta-Padmini-Kapila and of Hayavadana are dramatic statements on the same theme of the conflict between the head and the body. In this technique Karnad tries to follow Shakespeare as he has stated that he had always felt "tremendous fascination for Shakespeare's sub-plots — how he tells the same story twice from two different points of view" and adds "I have always aspired to write a subplot successfully" (Dhanave, 50).

*Hayavadana* formally ends with a song of benediction strikingly similar to but significantly different from *Dream*. Oberon, Titania and Puck invoke the blessings for three couples, wish them to have pretty normal children and the king all peace, rest and safety. This is suggestive of the rise of Renaissance nationalist discourse centered around monarchy subsuming all groups and interests. In *Hayavadana* Bhagabat prays for "good rains, good crop / prosperity in poetry, science, industry and other affairs", for the rulers of our country "success in all endeavours, and along with it a little bit of sense" (*Modern Indian Drama*, 322). This ironical ending read along with the issues of class, gender, nation inscribed into the text has a satirical dig at our present day insensible leaders and keeps open many issues and problems to be handled with care and the question of various groups and interests to be accommodated

within national frame-work. This is one way in which *Hayavadana* intertextually engages *Dream* deconstructing the nationalist discourse to construct space for the other.

All these incidents of absurdity, I may point out, inscribe what Bakhtin identifies as grotesque realism. For Bakhtin grotesque realism celebrates "the material bodily principle", and depicts "degradation, that is the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract, it is a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity" (*Rabelais and His World*, 19-20). It is the function of the character of Bottom to bring airy beings and beings of airy imagination and high elitism to the level of the earth, the ordinary. The incidents of metamorphosis in *Hayavadana* are the instances of the involvement with the ordinary, commonplace and grotesquely banal, and animalic, subversive of high-brow intellectualism. This is to be read along with Bakhtin's theory of carnival that displaces hirarchies and subverts the dominant order : "What is presented in carnival might be described as a minimally ritualized antiritual, a festive celebration of the other, the gaps and holes in all the mappings of the world laid out in systematic theologies, legal codes, normative poetics, and class hierarchies" (Clark and Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin*). *Hayavadana* denies the ascendance of the head in the body-politic and celebrates the material, and physical, challenges and soul/body, man/woman and high caste class/low caste class hierarchy. The princess's preference for a stallion, and for an animal life, Hayavadana's transformation into a horse, the confusion of the head and the other are all carnivalesque in nature. Above all, the folk tales and beliefs, rituals and magic and the folk form of Yakshagana in which common rural folk take part is carnivalesque opposed to the "normatic poetics" mouthed by brahmin Devadatta. *Hayavadana*, I would conclude, is dialogical in nature giving free play to various voices which remain non-merged, the voices which have been heard, suppressed and silenced in the *Dream* are played out in different forms and tones in *Hayavadana*. One question that comes up here is regarding the applicability of dialogism to drama, for Bakhtin denounces drama as monological, as the representation of the single authorial voice. But here by drama Bakhtin means illusionist drama, basically non-narrative in form. But Shakespeare's *Dream* with lots of choric elements, non-naturalist occurrences, songs and dances and epilogue breaks down the dramatic illusion that Brechtian epic theatre and Karnad's theatre aim at *Hayavadana* with Bhagabat as a narrator, the chorus narrating and commenting on the situation, with songs, dances and non-naturalistic situations is thus a dialogically structured texts that works out the intertext of Shakespeare's *Dream*,

alongwith other intertexts from folk tales and theatres to question and social inequality and cultural distortions in post-colonial India.

On the basis of this analysis I would like to state that literary/cultural appropriation of Shakespeare can be a productive approach to Shakespeare text in Indian classrooms. This is to explore the ways in which Shakespeare can interact with the student's living reality, "interact" does not mean only expanding its universal applicability but expounding the ways in which the issues which directly affect him and his surrounding, have been addressed or exclude by Shakespeare and Shakespeare criticism. Shakespeare as a discursive arena of conflicts is more relevant for the third world grappling with the contentious issues of race, class, caste, gender. One way of this cultural appropriation approach, I can suggest, is to teach Shakespeare by intertextually relating it to various third world texts, as exemplified by *Hayavadana* that have tried to respond to and/ or use Shakespeare in their own ways for their socio-cultural goals.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES


Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helen Iswolsey. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1984.

Clark, Katerine & Michael Holquist. *Michail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*. Cambridge: Harvard Press, 1984.

Dhanavel, P. *The Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad: Essays on Hayavadana*. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 2000.

Dohiya, Jaydipsinh. Ed. *The Plays of Girish Karnad: Critical Perspectives*. New Delhi: Prestige Books 1999.

Gates Jr, Henry Louis. *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*. Oxford: OUP 1988.

Karnad, Girish. "Hayavadana". Trans. Author. *Modern Indian Drama: An Anthology*. Ed. G. P. Deshpande. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel", *The Kristeva Reader*. Ed. Toril Moi. Oxford: OUP 1986.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto & Windus 1993.

——. *The World, the Text and the Critic*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Press, 1983.

Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. A. W. Verity.

Viswanathan, Gauri. "The Beginnings of English Literary Studies in British India". *Oxford Literary Review* 9: 1-2, 1987, pp. 2-26.

Worton, Michael and Judith Still. Ed. *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1990.